

Neag Center
for
Gifted Education
and
Talent
Development

NEWS & VIEWS

The latest in Gifted Education

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I HAVE LEARNED THAT IT IS NOT ONLY PERSONAL DRIVE AND HARD WORK THAT DEVELOP TALENT, BUT THE ENCOURAGEMENT AND NURTURING FROM EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE AROUND US THAT ALLOW US TO GROW AND LEARN. – DREW PETERSEN, 2006 DAVIDSON FELLOW

PARENT RESOURCES FROM THE DAVIDSON INSTITUTE

- TIPS FOR PARENTS: ADVOCACY IN ACTION

[HTTP://WWW.GT-CYBERSOURCE.ORG/RECORD.ASPX?NAVID=2_0&RID=11245](http://www.gt-cybersource.org/record.aspx?NAVID=2_0&RID=11245)

- HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR YOUR CHILD

[HTTP://WWW.GT-CYBERSOURCE.ORG/RECORD.ASPX?NAVID=2_0&RID=12748](http://www.gt-cybersource.org/record.aspx?NAVID=2_0&RID=12748)

- PREPARING FOR AND HOLDING AN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL MEETING

[HTTP://WWW.GT-CYBERSOURCE.ORG/RECORD.ASPX?NAVID=2_0&RID=11265](http://www.gt-cybersource.org/record.aspx?NAVID=2_0&RID=11265)

- COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH YOUR GIFTED CHILD'S SCHOOL

[HTTP://WWW.NAGGC.ORG/UPLOADEDFILES/PDF/SEPT2002SMUTNY.PDF](http://www.naggc.org/uploadedfiles/pdf/sept2002smutny.pdf)



TECHNOLOGY IN OUR SCHOOLS

BLOGGING NOW BEGINS YOUNG. From ASCD SmartBrief - Blogging enthusiasts say online classroom journals can be a great way to engage quiet youngsters who normally wouldn't raise their hands in class. One technology specialist says first-graders take their writing more seriously when it will be posted to a blog because they know their work will gain a public audience.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/usatoday/20061115/tc_usatoday/bloggingnowbeginsyoung



ONLINE EXERCISE TACKLES GLOBAL WARMING. Students from more than 80 schools from 20 different countries used Google's Web-based spreadsheets to collaborate about possible solutions to global warming.

<http://www.eschoolnews.org/news/showStoryts.cfm?ArticleID=6732>

MENTOS, DIET COKE, AND SCIENCE?

FOAMING FOUNTAIN PUTS THE FIZZ INTO SCIENCE. It is an experiment that has taken the world by storm. The simple but spectacular Diet Coke and Mentos explosion has sprung up on video sharing sites and scientists are hoping the experiment's popularity will inspire hard-to-impress youngsters to study science.

<http://education.guardian.co.uk/schools/story/0,,148554,00.htm>



THE SUPERGIRL DILEMMA



GIRLS FEEL THE PRESSURE TO BE PERFECT, ACCOMPLISHED, THIN, AND ACCOMMODATING. A Girls Incorporated study reveals increasingly unrealistic expectations facing today's girls, including intense pressure at ever younger grades to be everything to everyone all of the time. Persistent gender stereotypes and escalating stress levels limit girls' potential and undermine their quality of life.

<http://www.middleweb.com/mw/news/supergirl.doc>

GIFTED AND LEARNING DISABLED.

THE GIFTED LEARNING-DISABLED CHILD IS PERHAPS THE MOST MISUNDERSTOOD STUDENT. Some of the world's most talented, successful people struggled and failed miserably in school. Albert Einstein, as a young student was once described as an "idiot" because he could not master his schoolwork. Thomas Edison did not learn to read until he was twelve years old and President Woodrow Wilson was "severely dyslexic." However, for every person who manages to meet the challenges of their learning deficit, thousands of other students face failure because their learning disability has not been diagnosed and treated. <http://www.btimes.com/News/article/article.asp?NewsID=74599&slD=208>

MY ARTWORK AVAILABLE AT McDONALD'S AND BURGER KING?

CREATIVE KETCHUP CONTEST FOR YOUNG ARTISTS. The H.J. Heinz Co. is sponsoring a contest for young artists, in which winners' designs will be on single-serving Heinz Ketchup packets for 2007. Maximum Award: \$750 for arts supplies and \$750 worth of ketchup for winner's school. Eligibility: students grades 1-12. Deadline: December 31, 2006.

<http://www.ketchupcreativity.com/>



IDENTIFICATION AND PROGRAMMING ISSUES

SCHOOLS FAILING TO SPOT CLASSROOM TALENT. The government has ordered hundreds of state secondary schools in England to identify gifted pupils after a fifth claimed they did not have any. The schools minister, Lord Adonis, said children with special talents existed in every school, yet a census of the nearly 3,400 secondary schools in England by the Department for Education and Skills earlier this year revealed 20% did not think they had any gifted pupils.



<http://education.guardian.co.uk/schools/story/0,,1952805,00.html>

ESCAPING 'AVERAGE': A PUSH FOR STUDENTS WITH HIDDEN POTENTIAL. School leaders in Seaford, DE, had noticed for some time that very few average students took the most challenging courses in the town's secondary schools. As was the case in most small school systems, many Seaford families did not expect much. Parents and teachers did not want to push kids beyond their limits. Initiatives aimed at placing more "average" students in challenging classes focus on creating strong supplementary support systems. As one North Virginia AVID director put it, "Our program helps students recognize they are not average, but they have to develop certain skills to prove that to others.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/27/AR2006112701006.html>

ACCELERATION LETS STUDENTS EXCEL. Once frowned on, skipping grades now is accepted in gifted education, and a new law taking effect this school year requires districts to adopt an acceleration policy. While a study sponsored by the Ohio Department of Education found that many Ohio districts resisted the practice of letting children skip grades in the 2004 school year, a co-author of the study pointed out that no research indicates pushing children ahead hurts them academically, socially, or emotionally.

<http://news.enquirer.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20061210/NEWS0102/612100366>



HOW TO BRING OUR SCHOOLS OUT OF THE 20TH CENTURY. The world has changed, but the American classroom, for the most part, hasn't. Now educators are starting to look at what must be done to make sure our kids make the grade in the new global economy. This includes developing better global literacy, innovative thinking, teamwork skills, and thoughtful management of time.

<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1568429,00.html>

TESTING

THOSE WHO PASS CLASSES BUT FAIL TESTS CRY FOUL. Some students are finding that their state test scores and class grades don't match. The discrepancies have emerged amid fierce debate over the role of testing in public education. Supporters of the federal law say standardized exams are the best way to raise academic standards and the only way to hold schools accountable for results. Critics complain that time spent on test preparation saps classroom creativity and that test scores are just one indicator among many of student achievement. Whatever the reason, the fact that some bright students struggle on state exams upends the perception that only the worst students fail them.

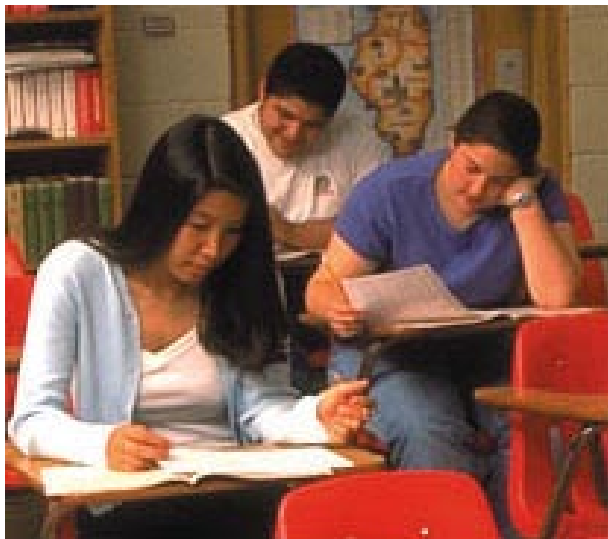


<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/21/AR2006112100075.html>

'VALUE ADDED' ASSESS STUDENTS, SCHOOLS. Pennsylvania districts have been adopting a new "Value Added Assessment" system, which analyzes scores on annual standardized state tests to chart individual students' progress over time rather than their ability to simply meet proficiency targets.

<http://www.timesleader.com/mld/timesleader/16105860.htm>

JUST WHOSE IDEA WAS ALL THIS TESTING? In ancient Greece, Socrates tested his students through conversations. Answers were not scored as right or wrong. They just led to more dialogue. Many intellectual elites in the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. cared more about finding the path to higher knowledge than producing a correct response. To them,



accuracy was for shopkeepers. Today, educators often hold up the Socratic method as the best kind of teaching, reports Jay Mathews. So how did we go from that ideal to an educational model shaped -- and perhaps even ruled -- by standardized, normed, charted, graphed, regressed, calibrated and validated testing? Historians call the rise of testing an inevitable outgrowth of expanding technology.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/13/AR2006111301007.html>

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

The logo for SmartBrief, featuring the word "Smart" in orange and "Brief" in white on a dark blue background.

(The following article descriptions are from ASCD
SmartBrief: <http://www.smartbrief.com/ascd/>)

D.C.–AREA STUDENTS EMBRACE AP, IB. Public high school students in the District of Columbia and 21 neighboring localities take Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate exams at a higher rate than any other part of the country, finds a Washington Post survey. Many students believe the challenging AP and IB classes boost their chances of admission to good schools and prepare them for the demands of college work.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/06/AR2006120602236.html>

N.C. COULD PUT ALL HIGH–SCHOOLERS ON COLLEGE TRACK. A proposal before the North Carolina Board of Education would require all state students, beginning with the Class of 2012, to pursue a curriculum that meets the state university system’s admission standards. Board members will hold community meetings next month to gauge public reaction to the plan before they schedule a vote on it.

<http://www.newsobserver.com/146/story/518689.html>

GROUP URGES MINNESOTA TO PAY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE–PREP WORK. A group of 17 private colleges in Minnesota has proposed the state set up scholarship accounts for minority and low-income high school students who take and pass college-prep courses. Some observers view the proposal, thought to be the first of its kind in the nation, as an intriguing way to encourage a greater diversity of students to tackle tougher courses in high school.

<http://www.twincities.com/mld/twincities/living/education/16032833.htm>

“OPTIONS” COURSE GIVES MINNESOTA STUDENTS CONFIDENCE. High school students in a hands-on “options” course have been given the opportunity to participate in community service projects and sports programs, using the on-site experience to build positive momentum for their own lives. The Oak Grove High School students in Shoreview, Minn., said they plan to use the confidence-building, real-world experience as they plan for their futures. <http://www.twincities.com/mld/twincities/15997878.htm>

POLL: TEENS FEEL INTENSE PRESSURE TO SUCCEED AT SCHOOL. More than 40% of teens report feeling overwhelming pressure to succeed at school and 22% admitted they’d cheated on a test in the last year, a Deloitte & Touche USA LLP and Junior Achievement poll of 787 teens found. Deloitte is developing a curriculum for schools’ Junior Achievement programs that will teach students how to make ethical decisions under pressure.

<http://www.philly.com/mld/philly/living/education/16211229.htm>

WEB-BASED INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLANS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

STATE'S INTERNET SITE HELPS STUDENTS PLAN THEIR STUDIES AND CAREERS . In order to ensure no student lacks the opportunity to go to college, Kentucky middle and high school students now can use the state's Web-based Individual Learning Plan to begin planning their academic and professional careers. The program includes a career-matchmaker function, the ability to explore 40 professions, a resume creator, and an option to check test scores online.

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStoryts.cfm?ArticleID=6716>

<http://www.courier-journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20061112/NEWS0105/611120577>

A STATISTICAL PICTURE OF U.S. SCHOOLS

A SNAPSHOT OF THE STATE OF U.S. EDUCATION. Did you know that despite all the criticisms leveled from coast to coast about K-12 public schools, most parents report being very satisfied with their child's school? Did you know that distance education courses are offered at more than half the country's two- and four-year postsecondary institutions? Did you know that Hispanic students accounted for 19% of public school enrollment in 2004, compared with 6% in 1972? These and other statistics are in the 2006 Condition of Education report published by the U.S. Department of Education. Each year, the department collects reams of data and statistically paints a portrait of where U.S. education stands. This article has highlights from the latest report.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/20/AR2006112000943.html>

STUDY REVEALS THAT PRINCIPALS PLAY MAJOR ROLE IN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS COULD BE A MATTER OF PRINCIPAL. Students' performance can soar under the influence of a good teacher, but school principals are just as important in getting results, a study has found. The research into 38 New South Wales high schools shows principals have a key responsibility in raising educational standards.

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/students-academic-success-can-be-a-matter-of-principal/2006/12/10/116568553902.html>

ATTENTION RESEARCHERS: CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS!

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT DABROWSKI'S THEORY OF POSITIVE DISINTEGRATION? *Roeper Review* will be publishing a special issue entitled "Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration: What it contributes to the field of gifted studies." To view the the call for manuscripts online, visit <http://www.sengifted.org/DABROWSKI%20call%20for%20papers.pdf>.

ADMISSIONS UPDATE



Since opening in August, 2006, The Davidson Academy of Nevada (<http://ditdlyris.davdgrp.com/t/213873/54160/473/o/>) has made great strides in bringing a truly unique educational

opportunity to life. One key aspect of what they have learned in the past few months is the importance of making sure that students at The Academy have sufficient options and space to fully experience the academic environment they are striving to create. Thus, after careful consideration, they have determined the need to alter their admissions procedures for the 2007-2008 school year. The new final deadline for receipt of The Davidson Academy applications is January 16, 2007. At this time, they anticipate accepting a class of no more than 20 new students for the 2007-2008 school year. Applicants can expect to receive notice of the acceptance or decline of their application by March 15, 2007. For additional information on how to apply, please visit <http://ditdlyris.davdgrp.com/t/213873/54160/688/o/>.

THE GEORGIA STORY: ONE STATE'S APPROACH TO THE UNDERREPRESENTATION ISSUE

How did Georgia increase the number of Black students participating in gifted programs 206%, the number of Hispanics 570%, and the number of multi-racial students 600%? Working with the University of Georgia's Dr. Mary Frasier on one of the landmark studies conducted by the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRC/GT), Georgia educators found ways to address what has been a perplexing and persistent problem, i.e., identifying gifted children from underrepresented groups - economically disadvantaged, certain ethnic minorities, limited English proficient, and culturally different. Dr. Frasier's Research-based Assessment Project and Staff Development Model was piloted in six Georgia school systems in the early 1990's, and the use of multiple criteria for eligibility helped those schools identify significantly more minority students for gifted program. Read more about this remarkable work at http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/sem/The_Georgia_Story.html.





HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM NEWS & VIEWS!

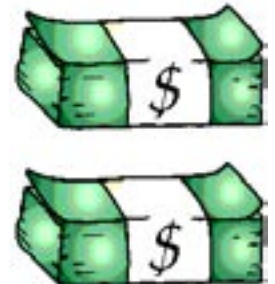
STAY WARM OUT THERE. For the News & Views readers in CT and other cold regions of the world, when you think it's too cold to do anything, just be glad you're not in Snag, Yukon, Canada, where it was -81.4 degrees F on February 3, 1847!



MONEY MATTERS



In this issue of "News and Views," we focus on two contests and a grant in mathematics. Submitting an application to the the grant just might multiply your funds, and these contests will add to your students' mathematical knowledge.



MONEY MATTERS: SPOTLIGHT ON MATHEMATICS

TEACHING GRANT – CLASSROOMS GRANTS



The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) awards classroom grants to K-12 mathematics and science teachers, who may apply for an award of up to \$200 per individual or \$1,000 per school. Teachers may use their funds to purchase manipulatives, software, calculators, kits, and more.

Applicants must become an AIAA Educator Associate. However, membership is free and available online at <http://www.aiaa.org/content.cfm?pageid=215>. Grant requests consist of a one page synopsis that includes a synopsis of how the funds will be used. Proposals are reviewed quarterly during January, March, June, and September. For more information on the grant, or on requirements for proposal submission, visit the AIAA website at <http://www.aiaa.org/content.cfm?pageid=216>.

Contributed by Nancy N. Heilbronner

MONEY MATTERS: SPOTLIGHT ON MATHEMATICS

STUDENT CONTEST – MATH LEAGUE



Looking for a math contest for your fourth through eighth graders? It's not too late to register for the Math League Contest. Over 1 million students from the United States and Canada participate each year. Students take a test consisting of multiple-choice questions that focus on a functional understanding of numerical and word problems. There is a \$30 registration fee per school, which entitles you to 30 copies of the test. Teachers proctor the tests, and then send them off for scoring. Awards are given to top scoring schools. Dates, preparatory materials, and registration forms are all available online at <http://www.mathleague.com/>.



STUDENT CONTEST – CRAZY FOR MATH



Have you ever wanted to connect math to students' lives in a very real way? Here's your chance to do just that, while at the same time encouraging a little fun competition. Crazy for Math is a contest open to all students under the age of 18. Students think of a practical way in which they can apply math in their lives, write up the experience, and submit it online or by snail mail. Winners are selected by local members of the math club. Prizes include educational software, math games, and much more.

Previous entries have included describing the math used in building a fort, in baking cookies, or even hiking up a mountain. The entry deadline is July 30, 2007, so you have lots of time to encourage great ideas! A more detailed description of the contest, plus an online entry form, may be found at <http://www.googlepower.com/content/crazy-4-math>.

Contributed by Nancy N. Heilbronner

RENZULLI LEARNING SYSTEMS RECOMMENDATIONS! Here are some great science websites!

Making 3-D Forms http://www.sanford-artedventures.com/create/tech_forms.html

Do you enjoy creating art projects? Add some depth to your projects with these three dimensional creations. There are directions and a printable pattern for each form. Once you get the hang of each you can put them together and there's no end to the possibilities.

The Beast of the Loch Ness <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/lochness/>

Do you believe in strange and unusual creatures? Maybe this site will change your mind. Read about odd creatures that have been discovered to be true. Get the full story on the legend of the Loch Ness monster. You can also check out a demonstration of how sonar works.

All About Atoms <http://education.jlab.org/atomtour/index.html>

Have you ever wondered about the tiny atoms that make up matter? Take a guided tour of the atom and find out all about each part including the neutrons, protons, and electrons. There are fun facts and detailed drawings to give you a sense of just how small atoms are.

Learn about the Skull - the Home for your Brain

<http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/skull.html>

At this interesting site, you can explore fascinating photographs and collections of skulls, and learn how your brain is protected by your skull. You can learn about the skulls of mammals, birds, reptiles and others. This is a wonderful resource for anyone interested in science or anatomy.

Earth and Moon Viewer <http://www.fourmilab.ch/earthview/vplanet.html>

Visit this amazing site to view images of the Earth from the Sun, the Moon, and any satellite in Earth's orbit. You can even view the Earth (and Moon) from above any location on the planet! The Moon viewer lets you see named formations and has an interactive perigee and apogee calculator. The Solar System Live link allows you to see the planet positions for any date!



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