

August 2010 Highlights in Florida Gifted Education for District Coordinators

Thought for August:

"Genius without education is like silver in the mine." Benjamin Franklin

Updated – and Add Your District

The WOGI website has been updated again (www.unfwogi.com). (See updates on Work Group products below). Note that the Resources page has a link to district gifted webpages. Currently Lee, Leon, Manatee, Miami-Dade, Orange, and Volusia County sites are linked. If your district has a gifted page, consider adding a link ("Reply" to this e-mail). If you don't have a page as yet, take a look at these six and see how you might adapt to suit your district. One page providing information can be a great resource for parents, teachers and the community. Also, consider citing WOGI's site as a resource for educators and parents. There is a good deal of information available.

Seeking Updates

Each fall we update our list of district contacts for gifted. While we realize there are changes during the year, at least we begin the school year with a current active list. We will be sending the information we have to date. If it is correct, you just need to click "reply" and confirm. Otherwise indicate any changes. Thank you for your cooperation. We will use the updated list for information about the Back-To-School district coordinator call coming soon.

Final WOGI Work Group Products Available

In 2009 we asked you to rate your priorities of need for further information for gifted education.

Responses indicated your top priorities were:

- A. Rtl for gifted
- B. How to document academic gains
- C. Using data
- D. Implementing the *Frameworks*
- E. Developing meaningful EPs
- F. Differentiated Instruction
- G. Acceleration
- H. Middle school and High school (course code references).

The 2009-10 work groups on these topics reported at the Institute in June. The final products of each work group are now posted on the WOGI site at www.unfwogi.com. Feel free to access them for your professional development this year.

A. Response to Intervention: A tab on the website links to a worksheet and brochure. This workgroup will continue to address this topic with updates. They are currently working to compile frequently asked questions (FAQ) about policies and practices with the intent to have these ready for sharing very soon. Stay tuned for updates from this dedicated group.

B. and C. Data: a flyer (brochure)

D. Frameworks - A new tool, "*Understanding and Using the Florida Frameworks for K-12 Gifted Learners: A Professional Development Module*" has been developed and will very soon be posted on the website. Those who attended the Institute received a copy of this CD for use in professional development in the district. It includes a PowerPoint presentation with accompanying worksheets and student examples. This professional development module may be used by coordinators of gifted programs, teachers of gifted or instructors of the gifted endorsement course for Curriculum. The resources can also be used independently by a teacher of the gifted to review or interact with the *Frameworks* for the purpose of applying the goals, objectives, and traits in lesson planning and design and documenting student progress. The module is designed so that the Power Point leads the learning process. After the PowerPoint is opened, slides with further information and directions for additional activities are included within the slides. The slides will direct the user to refer to different supportive documents.

E. EP development: Due to technical difficulties (the projector overheated), this work group did not have an opportunity to share their PowerPoint at the Institute. We are pleased to let you know that the PowerPoint, *Developing an Appropriate Educational Plan (EP) for Students Who Are Gifted*, and a revised version of their bookmark (reversible) are now available on the website.

F. Differentiated Instruction: a brochure (This was also a keynote at the Workshop for Teachers).

G. Acceleration: a brochure and a poster

H. Course Code Directory: a fact sheet/user guide and a PowerPoint

Also – a reminder about the PowerPoint presentation on the WOGI site entitled "Meeting the Needs of the Gifted Learner" which is available for download, courtesy of Miami-Dade County and Lisette Rodriguez.

We hope these products will be helpful in planning for this year. Just a reminder that the materials from Dr. Mary Slade's presentation are also on the website.

WOGI Part II – a Request

We are interested in forming workgroups for 2010-11 on the topics identified in the needs assessment survey sent in early summer. You indicated requests (as ranked) for more information on:

- 1. Gifted professional development** – what is needed? How to provide?
 - 2. Documenting academic gains for gifted learners – How?**
 - 3. Meaningful and measurable EP goals**
 - 4. Lesson plans for differentiated instruction that implement the Frameworks**
 - 5. Middle and secondary services – a closer look**
 - 6. Screening strategies for gifted** (addressing disproportionality and the twice exceptional student)
- Rtl for gifted** was also highly ranked as an area where more information is needed and we are pleased to announce that the 2009-10 workgroup is continuing and are currently putting together an additional document for your use. We will let you know when it is finalized.
- Please notify Donnajo if you are interested in participating in any of these six work groups. No travel is involved. Typically each group arranges monthly conference calls.

FCAT Testing Dates for 2010-11

The revised **Florida Statewide Assessment Program 2010-2011 Schedule** is now posted on the Florida Department of Education website at: <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-5478/stwasa.pdf>.

Class Size Revisited

To help Floridians educate themselves about class size regulations and the proposed changes up for a vote in November, the Department has created a Class Size Resource web page. As the primary agency responsible for the implementation of class size throughout the state, the site provides a variety of historical information and documentation allowing all Floridians to better understand the impacts of class size in Florida. For more information visit <http://www.fldoe.org/classsize/>.

Celebrate Freedom Week September 2010

As discussed at the June WOGI institute, districts are encouraged to meet both state and federal statute requirements for commemorating Constitution Day (September 17) and Celebrate Freedom Week (September 20-24). Florida Statute 1003.42 indicates required instruction related to: history and content of the Declaration of Independence; history, meaning, significant and effect of the provisions of the Constitution and amendments; arguments support our republican form of government; flag education; elements of civic government; history of the United States; history of the Holocaust; history of African Americans and Hispanics and much more. Statute 1003.421 specifically addresses recitation of the Declaration of Independence and requires at least three hours of appropriate instruction in each social studies class during Celebrate Freedom week. And Statute 1003.44 requires all schools to focus on greater respect for the government and its national anthem and flag. There will be a state proclamation from the Governor to recognize the week. Educators who work with gifted students may find this a meaningful way to provide differentiated instruction. Examples: encouraging local legislators or legal figures to meet with students or have students visit a courtroom. This could increase legislators' awareness of gifted education. In an election year, speakers may be readily available. Information for teachers will be posted at <http://www.fldoe.org/BII/Humanities/celebratefreedom.asp>.

Gifted In the News

- About 17,000 Kansas City, Mo., students will be **grouped by ability** in the fall rather than by grade level. Officials say they hope the reform will help improve student achievement. Under the new system, students will learn at their own pace -- primarily individually or in small groups. Teachers instruct the entire group only when necessary. School districts across the country have experimented with instructing students by ability. Instead of moving kids from one grade to the next as they get older, schools are grouping students by ability. Once they master a subject, they move up a level. This practice has been around for decades, but was generally used on a smaller scale, in individual grades, subjects or schools. Researchers found that students who learned through the different approach were 2.5 times more likely to score at a level that shows they have a good grasp of the material on exams for reading, writing, and mathematics. (Google/Associated Press).

- Students in one California district's gifted-education program learned **how science can relate to art and animation** from a biology professor who is a frequent anatomical consultant in Hollywood. "I thought that you just drew pictures, but I didn't know that you needed any science and math to do it," one sixth-grader said. Inland Valley Daily Bulletin- Ontario, CA.
- Mrs. Beck's class at Astoria Park in Leon County had a "**Dream Project.**" Students began by writing about their dreams and goals for their lives and then charted a course. They discussed that one way to learn how to live our lives is to listen to senior citizens and learn how they made their dreams a reality. Mrs. Beck worked with the Volunteer Coordinator at the **Tallahassee** Senior Center to match students with local senior citizens. As part of the class, students and "their seniors" corresponded. Students did research about the seniors' lives (where they were born, their profession, etc.) and wrote interview questions. In November, the seniors visited the school. Each student interviewed her/his senior, Mrs. Beck filmed, and the class compiled a full-length movie complete with still shots, maps and music. On December 9, they held the "world premiere" of their movie "Dreams Come True." The PTO set up a popcorn machine and had drinks. The PTO presented little "Oscars" to the seniors and students. The Tallahassee Film Society donated a couple of vintage cartoons which were shown before the film created by students. Each student and each senior received a DVD of the film. Access the class web site: <http://www.wildclassroom.net/AstoriaPark/dream.html>.
- One New Jersey school district is **expanding its gifted-education focus** to better meet the needs of students who are gifted, as well as help develop the individual talents of all students. The new program includes plans to differentiate classroom instruction and assignments for all students and provide enrichment opportunities and support for students who are gifted. The district plans to use multiple measurements to assess students for giftedness and differentiate instruction at every level. [Greater Media Newspapers \(N.J.\)/Examiner](#)
- Parents and educators say New York City's process for **identifying students** for gifted-kindergarten programs offers an advantage to families that can afford test preparation. The city in 2008 adopted a standardized test as its sole admissions criterion, which has led to lower minority enrollment and a thriving test-preparation business. Outreach efforts have increased the number of Hispanics and blacks in the city's gifted-kindergarten classes, and a new test is being developed to level the playing field. [The New York Times](#)
- One Arizona school district is offering **self-contained classrooms for gifted** students at two elementary schools this fall. The classes will allow educators to expand advanced instruction beyond math and language arts to include higher-level work in science and social studies. The district will offer the classes for third-graders, who could remain in the classes through elementary school. Officials say they could add to the number of gifted classes if demand grows. [Ahwatukee Foothills News \(Phoenix\)](#)

Florida Odyssey of the Mind World Winners

Odyssey of the Mind World Finals was held at Michigan State University this year. This year there were 132 international teams from countries around the world, including Canada, China, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Russia, Singapore, and South Korea as well as teams from the Department of Defense Dependent Schools. After three days of competition, Florida had a number of teams place in the top ten:

Problem One: Nature Trail'R

Division I 3rd place – Poinciana Elementary in Palm Beach County
8th place - Veteran's Memorial Elementary in Collier County
Division II 8th place – Sarasota Christian in Sarasota County

Problem Two: Return to the Gift of Flight

Division I 3rd place – Poinciana Elementary in Palm Beach
Division II 7th place – Madeira Beach Fundamental School in Pinellas
8th place – Pryor Middle in Okaloosa County

Problem Three: Discovered Treasures

Division II 4th place - Bonita Springs Middle in Lee County
9th place - St. Charles Borromeo in Orange County

Problem Four: Column Structure

Division III 4th place – Wiregrass Ranch High School in Pasco County
8th place – Southeast High School in Manatee County

Problem Five: Food Court

Division II 10th place – Thomas Weightman Middle in Pasco County
Division III 5th place – River Ridge High School in Pasco County
Division IV 1st place – University of Central Florida

Information about the 2011 problems is on the website at <http://www.odysseyofthemind.com/>.

Highlights of the 2010 FCAT results include:

- The percentage of students scoring proficient and above in reading increased by one point in grades 6 (67 percent), 7 (68 percent), 8 (55 percent), and 9 (48 percent), and two points in grade 10 (39 percent).
- The percentage of students scoring proficient and above in mathematics increased by one point in grades 5 (63 percent) and 7 (61 percent), two points in grades 6 (57 percent) and 8 (68 percent), and four points in grade 10 (73 percent).
- The percentage of students scoring proficient and above in science increased by three points in grade 5 (49 percent), two points in grade 8 (43 percent), and one point in grade 11 (38 percent).
- In Writing, approximately 95 percent of students in grades 4 (94 percent), 8 (96 percent), and 10 (94 percent) scored at or above 3 on the six-point grading scale. The percent of students scoring a four or higher was 68 percent in grade 4, 76 percent in grade 8, and 72 percent in grade 10.

For more information about this year's FCAT results, visit <http://fcat.fldoe.org/mediapacket/2010/>.

Senate Bill 4 Impact

SB 4 heightens graduation standards and phases out part of the high school FCAT. The new law will eventually require students to take geometry, two years of algebra, biology, chemistry or physics and an additional "rigorous" science course in order to graduate. DOE would also create and eventually implement end-of-course exams.

Challenge Grants 2010-11

Four programs have been approved for funding for the 2010-11 school year. The focus this year is on collaboration with a university and meaningful professional development for teachers who work with gifted students. The four programs are:

Florida State University Lab School: Space Technology and Engineering is designed to incorporate the complexity of technological problem solving in space flight with the science of aerospace engineering, physics and mathematics. Gifted students will learn and work with professionals as they manage the technological problems encountered during multiple simulated space flights.

Miami-Dade County School District: The GPEX (Gifted Program Exploring Science Project) goals focus on improving gifted students' achievement in science, increasing the number of hands-on inquiry science lessons provided to gifted students, providing professional development to all gifted teachers in the ten targeted schools, and providing continuing education opportunities through Miami Dade College for interested gifted teachers at selected schools. The project is a collaborative proposal with Miami-Dade College and the Miami Science Museum intending to serve 2,457 gifted students and 91 teachers.

Osceola County School District: Osceola will collaborate with UCF on Fostering Opportunity and Renewal in Gifted Education. The intent is an instructional redesign and students' development of higher-level skills through Renaissance-themed, challenging activities. Thirty teachers will participate at four schools. Teachers will receive professional development to facilitate gifted education and arts activities integration. Students will participate in a culminating Renaissance festival.

Volusia County School District: Design Thinking: From Insights to Innovation is collaboration between Stanford University, the Museum of Florida Art, University of Central Florida, Daytona State University, and Volusia's gifted program. Approximately 125 teachers of the gifted and twenty-four art teachers from twenty-five schools, K-12, will train and develop a redesign of curriculum for gifted learners intended to focus on innovation, creative problem solving techniques and critical thinking as developed by Stanford's *Design Thinking* program. Approximately 1800 gifted students and 60 high-achieving students from underrepresented subgroups will participate.

Congratulations to all! We look forward to hearing about the success of these programs. This might be a good time to begin to develop initial alliances with a local college or university to identify staff who could provide professional development for teachers who work with students who are gifted. The call for applications for the grants for 2011-12 will be out in the fall so it is not too soon to begin to make those connections. We will be providing a document this fall as a guide in development of an application.

Congratulations to Future Problem Solving Teams

Florida's top state teams traveled to the International Conference at the University of Wisconsin at LaCrosse, June 10-13, 2010. Congratulations to these winning teams:

- **Community Problem Solving(CmPS):**
2nd Place team Senior Division, Flagler, Palm Coast HS coached by Diane Tomko.

Project: Cents and Sensibility *Team members - Wesley Adams, Brittany Eggum, and Juan Flores*
 1st Place Individual Middle Division Kylie Lan Tumiatti, Miami-Dade, Our Lady of Lourdes coached by Patricia Liebau, *Project Operation Hope Reading*
 1st Place Individual_Senior Division Taylor Tofal, Flagler, Palm Coast HS coached by Diane Tomko, *Project The Cookbook Project*

- Global Issues Problem Solving

1st Place Individual Middle Division Haley Warner, Brevard, Central Middle School coached by Michelle Circosta.

- Global Issues Problem Solving

3rd Place Team Senior Division- Flagler, Palm Coast HS (Clay Hausen, Ermerick Larkin, Vincent Scerbo, Taylor Tofal) coached by Diane Tomko

- Global Issues Problem Solving

6th Place Team_Middle Division- Manatee, FPS Club (Meg Rivera, Sarah Stevens, Brittany Wenger, Mackenzie Yaryura) coached by Deborah Yaryura

- Global Issues Problem Solving

Alternate Competition

1st Place Middle Division – Connor Yaryura, Manatee, FPS club, coach Deborah Yaryura

1st Place Senior Division – Brandon Smith, Flagler, Palm Coast HS, coach Diane Tomko

2nd Place Senior Division – Dara Gyorko, Brevard, Melbourne HS, Coach Cindy Gartz

3rd Place Senior Division – Michael Draper, Brevard, Melbourne HS, Coach Cindy Gartz

- Scenario Writing

4th Place Scenario Middle Division Brittany Cho, Brevard, West Shore Jr/Sr HS, Coach Kathy Thayer.

Brittany also won 2nd Place in the on-site competition and was selected as the Best Writer in the Middle Division

- On-Site Scenario Competition

2nd Place Junior Division – Noel Fleig, Brevard, Suntree Elementary, Coaches Christy Fleig & Kitt Kane

2nd Place Senior Division - Rebecca McFadden, Brevard, Eau Gallie HS, Coach David Driscoll

The Florida teams were most proud of the Community Problem Solving team from Flagler's Palm Coast HS (Cullin Cino, Cameron Jacobs, Ryan McDermott, Michael Scerbo, Vincent Scerbo, & Brandon Smith coached by Diane Tomko) which won the coveted Beyond Award. This award, started by Dr. E. Paul Torrance, the founder of FPS, is given to a team or individual who go above and "beyond" what others have done. Their project was called Faces of Autism.

For 2010-11: The Registration form for 2010-11 is available at the website <http://www.fifpsp.org/> and materials will be sent in late August or early September. State competition will be in Port Canaveral March 20-23, 2011. Topics include: Healthy Living, Air Transport, Genetic Testing, Water Quality and Emergency Planning.

Duke Talent Identification Program (TIP) Update

We have received an update of Duke TIP participation for Florida students for 2009-10:

Fourth/Fifth grade:

Number of districts participating:	45
Total student applicants	4,130
2,036 males 2,094 females	
59.9% Caucasian, 14% Hispanic	
11% Other, 6% Asian, 6% African American	
Total receiving feegrant	447
Total testers	629
Qualified for state recognition	35

Seventh Grade Talent Search

Number of districts participating	53
Total student applicants	9,376
4,884 males 4,492 females	
7,400 applied by SAT scores	
1,976 applied by ACT scores	
60% Caucasian, 14% Hispanic	
10% Other, 7% Asian, 5% African American	
Total students tested	8,664
Total receiving feegrant	1,035
Qualified for state recognition	2,994

Qualified for Grand recognition
Qualified for Summer Studies Programs

168
3,421

Registration for grades 4/5 begins in January. Registration for grade seven begins in September. For more information about Duke TIP check the website at www.tip.duke.edu.

Florida Teacher of the Year

Cheryl Conley, a fourth grade teacher at Osceola Magnet Elementary in Indian River has been named FLDOE/Macy's 2011 Teacher of the Year. Ms. Conley received the honor for her dedication to her students, her goal-oriented teaching style and her ability to inspire them beyond their own expectations.

Spotlight: Virtual Schooling

The current issue of *Distance Learning - A Magazine for Leaders*, sponsored by the U.S. Distance Learning Association, Fischler School of Education, Nova Southeastern University and Information Age Publishing, features an article by Christine Weber, WOGI and UNF, and Donnajo Smith titled "Meeting the Needs of Gifted Students Through Online Programs."

A Computer Look at the Stars

NASA has joined with Microsoft to create a digitized map of the night sky -- including a 3-D map of Mars that users can navigate on a computer. The mapping project, called Terapixel, can be viewed using Microsoft's free Internet-based WorldWide Telescope program, and was developed to help interest students in studying science and related fields. "What we're trying to do at NASA is make our data more accessible," NASA's chief technology officer said, "and we're doing that by connecting students in the classroom and at home to a user-friendly platform." [eSchool News](#)

NAGC Special Program

NAGC is offering a special opportunity with a one-day Virtual Conference: **Back to School/Back to Gifted: Classroom Tools and Techniques to Jumpstart the School Year**. The full-day event on Wednesday, August 18 will be delivered via the same platform used for the NAGC Webinars. Strands include: Classroom Management, Parent/Community Support, Instructional Models, and Addressing Learner Differences. Christine Weber, UNF and WOGI will be presenting on "Exploring Issues in Gifted Education" as part of the Parent/Community strand. A Site License (\$399 good for groups of 5 or more) includes: Live access for 5+ attendees, access for the purchaser (if you wish to host an event in the future), a customized discussion guide for each track, and PowerPoint slides to print for attendees. Check the NAGC website for details.

Miami-Dade Special Program

Miami Dade offers a program called **Teaching Enrichment Activities to Minorities (TEAM)** which is designed to provide for the instruction of higher order thinking skills to students within predominantly minority-populated schools in a self-contained elementary school classroom setting. TEAM integrates thinking skills instruction within all subject areas to strengthen the thinking processes of students. Contact Lisette Rodriguez (LTRodriguez@dadeschools.net) for more information.

SP&P Documents to be Updated

BEESS is preparing a revision to the ESE Policies and Procedures document (SP&P) to incorporate district policies and procedures related to use of manual physical restraint and seclusion. This document will be provided to districts shortly and must be submitted to the Bureau no later than January 31, 2011.

PEER Update

The initial intent of the PEER program was to develop forms for IEPs and EPs that would be consistent for all districts to facilitate transition when a student transfers. Currently PEER is available to 18 districts with an additional 12 planning to implement soon.

Race to the Top Update

Finalists in the second round are: Arizona, California, Colorado, District of Columbia, **Florida**, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and South Carolina. All scored above 400 points on the 500-point scale. Florida applied for \$700 million. Awards will be announced in late August or early September.

The Common Core Standards – an Update

Florida's State Board of Education voted July 27 to adopt the Common Core Standards for mathematics and English. The common standards are better than the math and English curricula in at least 33 states, and many others were too close to call, according to an analysis by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute which found that the national math standards are equal to or better than those in place in all 50 states and Washington, D.C., while three states had a better English curriculum -- California, D.C. and Indiana. Forty states are expected to adopt the benchmarks by this fall.

No More Pencils, No More Books?

Students at Clearwater High School will have lighter backpacks this coming school year, as the school becomes the first known in the country to replace textbooks with Kindle electronic readers. Each student will be issued one of the electronic devices, and the school will load as many textbooks as it can afford onto them. This move is to accomplish numerous goals, said Principal Keith Mastorides. School surveys of students, parents and faculty always come back indicating a desire for more ways to integrate technology, he said. The school looked at their accounts, technology and textbook dollars and discovered Kindles were a cost-effective way to meet their goals within their budget. Kindles cost about \$180, so replacing one is equivalent to two traditional textbooks. However, with the Kindles, parents may buy an insurance policy for about \$20-\$30, which covers loss and damage. (Seminole Beacon © 07/22/2010)

Public Invited to Comment on Arts Standards

The draft Next Generation Sunshine State Standards in the Arts are now available for public review and comment. The public is invited to share their thoughts on the new standards for Visual Art, Music, Theatre and Dance through August. 22. Visit www.flstandards.org to view the standards and submit comments.

First Freedom Competition

The First Freedom Student Competition has added a video category to its annual essay competition. The 2010/2011 national ESSAY and VIDEO contest will offer 9th - 12th grade students an opportunity to compete for \$2,500 awards as they examine the First Amendment and the history and implementation of religious freedom and freedom of conscience in American democracy. This year, students will select a religion or belief group from their local community, state or region that was or is a minority group. They will research and analyze its history as it encounters issues of religious freedom and equality, and then present their evaluation of how this group's local history compares to the broader narrative of U.S. history and First Amendment law. For the complete topic, essay and video guidelines, registration, classroom poster, student flyer and other details, visit www.firstfreedom.org, and then click the red First Freedom Student Competition button (center column). Online registration is required on or before Monday, November 15, and the postmark deadline is Saturday, November 27.