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# Newsletter

Spring 2011

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Parents, Educators and Community Leaders Advocating Appropriate Instruction for All Gifted Learners in Virginia

## Riley "Works from Home"

by Sherry Cosby, 6th Grade Teacher, Advanced Academic Center, Fairfax County Public Schools

Photo courtesy of Cosby family



Riley working at home

At two years old, my granddaughter, Riley has her own laptops. She's adept at both operating systems, can choose her own learning programs and is excited to see what she will learn next. Riley can also use the TV remote to control the TV, cable and VCR/DVD player. She is adept with anyone's cell phone by initiating and answering calls as well as opening the camera mode and asking her subjects to "Say cheeeeeese!" as she clicks their picture. Riley is a digital native as a nubile citizen of the 21st century. Will her teachers be ready for her in three short years? Will I be ready for the Rileys coming to me? What tools and Best Practices will I need? Are *you* ready for Riley and her peers?

Matthew's fifth grade teacher warned me that he doesn't like to work hard and is a bit immature for his age, but he loves technology. Samuel, Meghna and Sahana are also in my sixth grade class, are highly gifted students and work at the other end of the spectrum from Matthew. However, their previous teachers informed me that they all love technology, too. I asked myself, "How will I have to change my teaching so that I can be effective for Matthew, Meghna, Samuel and Sahana now, as well as for the Rileys coming very soon to my classroom?" After this school year of experimentation and a plethora of guidance from all of my students, I whole-heartedly recommend Digital Portfolios, which has motivated me to refine my Teacher Research question to: *How can I use technology more effectively to increase my students' learning, understanding and development into self-directed learners, so that my students learn to be critical thinkers by considering issues and data from many perspectives?*

Students today are avid members of the iPod generation, who expect entertainment on demand in the format they want and customizable to their mood at any given time. Digital portfolios (DP) provide great potential for showcasing student understanding and growth over time using assignments

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# Digital Portfolios

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they are already doing. Having your students maintain a DP is not an add-on; it's a more exciting process of what you are already doing that captures and holds your students' attention.

Literally, Digital Portfolios are "playlists" of student-produced learning products and process: infinitely re-orderable and electronically searchable for opportunistic discovery of previously overlooked lesson or homework content, or systematic recombination of knowledge blocks for self-reflection from new perspectives via computer-mediated collaboration and peer review.

I deliberately selected KompoZer (KompoZer.net), a free web editor, as the "container" for the DPs because of its flexible, content-organizing characteristics and its ability to extend student learning by allowing students to access the source code and learn HTML, if they want to adapt the DP container to their own styles. Matthew, Sahana, Meghna and Samuel all were fascinated by what they could accomplish with learning HTML. I am maintaining my own teacher DP and just beginning to understand the power of manipulating the source code to differentiate the functionality to suit special learning needs. Fortunately, KompoZer is versatile and expandable enough for me, a digital immigrant, as well as for my students, who are all digital natives. Other possible containers to consider are Windows MovieMaker™, Apple iMovie™, SMART Notebook™, Word™, or even PowerPoint™. Look for the software most readily available to you and your students while amplifying the flexibility and creativity with a Digital Portfolio. Although KompoZer has the capability of web publishing, I have my students keep their DP on an 8GB jump drive for security reasons.

## *Habits of Mind*

My students and I incorporate Costa and Kallick's (Costa and Kallick, 2000) 16 Habits of Mind: Persisting; Managing Impulsivity; Listening with Understanding and Empathy; Thinking Flexibly; Thinking About Thinking (Metacognition); Striving for Accuracy; Questioning and Problem Posing; Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations; Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision; Gathering Data Through All Senses; Creating, Imagining, Innovating; Responding with Wonderment and Awe; Taking Responsible Risks; Finding Humor; Thinking Interdependently; and Remaining Open to Continuous Learning. Students "Collect, Inspect, Select and Reflect" their own artifacts of their learning, and incorporate the "thought-full" language of the Habits to metacogitate (Costa and Marzano, 2001) about what was going on in their heads during their initial learning and why they chose a particular artifact to represent that learning. My students are constantly talking about their learning in their portfolio at school and online, so opportunities to develop positive attitudes and perceptions are abundant. Students feel accepted and are comfortable taking risks with new technologies and show more effort to improve. The Habits facilitated the change in my thinking and assignments to think digitally.

I created a one-page chart of the HOMs for my students and posted it on my Blackboard Academic Suite site, an online, password-protected learning community my school district purchased to help keep our students safe while online. Blackboard virtually extends the walls of my classroom to enclose my students anywhere in the world. For the months of December and January this past school year, Pallavi had to return to India with her family. She was able to keep up with many of her assignments during her absence from the school building through Blackboard's Announcements, wikis, blogs, Discussion Board, online statistics, and many other amazing

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# Digital Portfolios

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For the full-size examples, see <http://vagifted.org/Newsletters/cosbyexamples.pdf>.

## Example 1 – Samuel

Blackboard Academic Site 5/9/11 12:23 PM  
 COSBY SPACE STATION 09-10 (331.7-108-0910-Y0) > CONTROL PANEL > DISCUSSION BOARD > VB\_THREAD\_LIST\_OF\_LABEL > THREAD DETAIL

**Thread Detail**

Collect Flag Clear Flag Mark Read Mark Unread Subscribe Search

Thread: Striving for Accuracy as a Self-Directed Learner Reply

Total posts: 1 Unread posts: 0 Previous Thread Next Thread

Striving for Accuracy as a Self-Directed Learner Samuel Hsiang 3/18/10 5:00 PM

Refresh Select All Go

Subject: Striving for Accuracy as a Self-Directed Learner Reply Quote Modify Set Flag Remove

Author: Samuel  
 Posted date: Thursday, March 18, 2010 5:00:34 PM EDT  
 Last modified date: Thursday, March 18, 2010 5:00:34 PM EDT  
 Total views: 15 Your views: 3

Striving for Accuracy

Self-Directed Learning	Self-Modifying	Self-Managing	Self-Monitoring
Striving for Accuracy	Modifying your strategy is important for being a Self-Directed Learner. Something cannot be perfect on a first try. To make sure something keeps improving, a person needs to change their strategy. Something cannot improve without change.	Managing time often conflicts with trying to get all of the questions correct on a test, especially if time is limited. Managing self control helps people concentrate on problems and helps prevent people from getting frustrated about a problem.	Monitoring a person's work helps check their work. I double-check, triple-check, especially on timed tests that do not take too long for me; for example, the CMLs. I think that making sure that I get all of the problems correct is more important than finishing first.

Strategic Behaviors for Striving for Accuracy:

- Never over-estimate yourself. If you room to improve.
- Always check, no matter how easy
- Don't be intimidated to rush on a test higher grades than people who rush
- Change your strategy to adapt to it

--Samuel

## Example 2 – Meghna

Thread: Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations  
 Post-Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations  
 Author: Meghna  
 Date: Monday, March 22, 2010  
 Status: PUBLISHED  
 Overall rating: Not rated

If you apply past knowledge to new situations, you are transferring prior knowledge to new situations to help you learn better. As Mrs. Cosby said, it helps you scaffold new accumulating prior knowledge to new situations.

Here is a chart on how this Habit of Mind can have many strategic behaviors that relate to the three M's:

Self-Modifying	Self-Monitoring	Self-Managing
Construct meaning from all experiences and apply it to learning and future activities. For example, say you remembered learning about liquids in fourth grade, and then you realize that there is an upcoming camp for science lovers. If you want to achieve a lot of knowledge from this camp, you would first apply prior knowledge to learn more. Like scaffolding! You obviously would apply past knowledge into your reflections in your Portfolio! For example, say you wanted to reflect on Geometer's Sketch Pad.	Establishing past knowledge to create unique alternatives for accomplishments and success. For example, when we are working on our wiki's, we need to create alternative plans in case one plan goes wrong. It can help you have success and achieve what you wanted, hopefully!	Drawing from past experiences to manage your grades. For example, say you had to take a math test on fractions and you remember many of the facts from past experiences and learning, if you were a Self-Directed Learner, you would apply that knowledge to your test, and hopefully achieve a good grade. This is how you can manage your grades. When you are modifying yourself, you can apply past knowledge on how you maybe modified yourself in past experiences. You can add this process into your

online tools. Blackboard has become a goldmine for digital artifacts that my students produce. Students kept a hard copy of the Habits on their home refrigerator (or on their bedroom bulletin board) and one in their DP Notebook. Their DP Notebook is where they wrote their ideas, thoughts and suggestions they wanted to be sure to include in their DP, the next time they sat at the computer. Each week I posted information about the “Habit of Mind of the Week” in the class Blackboard Announcements. From the announcements, I initiated a Discussion Board question concerning the weekly Habit of Mind. The children responded to my question as well as to at least two other classmates. There were enough weeks in the school year to discuss each Habit at least twice, and my choice of 4-5 Habits three times.

For the following student examples (see Example 1 and 2 at left), I asked the children to give specific examples of their strategic behaviors for Striving for Accuracy and Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations by being self-modifying, self-managing and self-monitoring.

The Discussion Board forum gave my students and me asynchronous opportunities to “discuss” each Habit of Mind. From the numerous Discussion Board posts, I searched by each author creating a “listing” of all their postings, either their original posts or responses to others’ postings. From the listing, I created a PDF document so the children could include their responses and a reflection of their learning and thinking in their portfolio. The PDF became a DP artifact for students to reflect on their writing, spelling, grammar, thinking and understanding of the HOM of the week and each other.

## Conflict Resolution in the Classroom

I expect my students to be active members of our learning community and work productively together on our many project-based and problem-based units, but I have found the need to teach them how to do so. I use Kagan structures (kaganonline.com) extensively in my class and I divide my class into collaborative/cooperative learning groups of 3-4 students. Within each student group, there are four rotating jobs: Conflict Manager, Encourager, Task Manager, and “Go-For” (the teacher or supplies). I interleave a series of conflict resolution lessons the first few weeks of school that I’ve developed over the years with a counselor colleague. I essentially train each student to be a mediator, so the children are able to resolve conflicts that arise in the classroom and especially online. I use the conflicts that arise throughout the school year as opportunities to practice and hone conflict resolution skills.

## Digital Portfolios as Formative Assessment

My students and I created a rubric (Marzano, 2010) and the “Excel™ Multifaceted Score Sheet” to assess their progress. I made a copy of each student’s DP every three weeks, and stored them on a large storage drive. This allowed me to see their progress within a set amount of time. For 26 of my 28 students, English is their second language. My students were constantly thinking, writing, and speaking about their learning with me, and each other. Michael Clay Thompson’s English Language Arts curriculum for Advanced Learners (Thompson, 2010) has given my students a huge boost on incorporating powerful vocabulary, sentence, writing and poetic choices in their communications.

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# Digital Portfolios

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For the full-size example, see

<http://vagifted.org/Newsletters/cosbyexamples.pdf>

## Example 3 – Portfolio Score Sheet

Multi-Faceted Rubric for Digital Portfolio for

Date	3/16/11	4/6/11	5/4/11	5/25/11	6/8/11
Facet to be scored	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
<b>Writing Traits</b>					
Voice					
Ideas & Content					
Sentence Fluency					
Word Choice					
Organization					
Conventions					
<b>Artifacts/Reflections</b>					
Required Amount of Artifacts					
Depth and Richness of Reflection					
<b>Visually Pleasing</b>					
Contrast					
Repetition					
Alignment					
Proximity					
<b>Navigation Within Portfolio</b>					
Reliability of Links					
Navigation Panel in Index Page					
Navigation Panel on Each Page					
Incorporation of Advanced Features					
<b>Self-Directed Learning</b>					
Self-Modifying					
Self-Managing					
Self-Monitoring					
<b>Documentation</b>					
Bibliography Page					
Attribution on Icons, Banners, etc.					
<b>Artifacts</b>					
Choice to Demonstrate Growth					
Easily Accessible					
Variety of Artifacts					
Variety of Technological Choices					
Dated (to facilitate documentation of growth)					
Encompasses All Curricular Areas					
<b>Standards</b>					
Content SOL/POs Stated					
National Technology Standards					
Concurrently Apply Multiple of Standards					
Reflection Focused on Exceeding Standards					
Documented Growth in Oral Communication					
Documented Growth in Spelling					
Documented Growth in Written Communication					
Documented Growth in Reading					
Documented Growth in Math					
Documented Growth in Science					
Documented Growth in Social Studies					
<b>Timeliness</b>					
Portfolio Up to Date					
Portfolio Turned In On Time					
<b>File Organization and Hierarchy</b>					
Root Level (HTML pages and Media Folder)					
2nd Level (Media Easily Accessible .jpg, PDF, .)					
Average of Facet Scores	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Self-Directed Learning Average	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

## Digital Portfolio Rubric Scale

- 4.0 Student demonstrates more, exceptional, and complex content and understanding through in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond what was taught.
- 3.5 In addition to score 3.0, student demonstrates performance and partial success at score 4.0 content through inferences and applications that go beyond what was taught.
- 3.0 Student demonstrates generally more, exceptional, and complex content and understanding, with no major errors or omissions regarding any of the information and/or processes (simple or complex).
- 2.5 In addition to score 2.0, student demonstrates performance and partial success at score 3.0 content, with no major errors or omissions regarding the simpler details and processes, and partial knowledge of more complex ideas and processes.
- 2.0 Student demonstrates no major errors or omissions regarding the simpler details and processes, but there are major errors or omissions regarding the more complex ideas and processes, and partially more, exceptional, and complex content and understanding than score 1.5.
- 1.5 In addition to score 1.0 performance, student demonstrates partial knowledge of the simpler details and processes and success at score 2.0 content, understanding some of the more complex ideas and processes.
- 1.0 With help, student demonstrates partial success at score 2.0 content, understanding some of the simpler details and processes and some of the more complex ideas and processes.
- 0.5 With help, student demonstrates a partial success at score 2.0 content, but not at score 3.0, understanding of some of the simpler details and processes, but not of the more complex ideas and processes.
- 0.0 Even with help, student demonstrates no success, understanding or skill.

Adapted from *Classroom Instruction That Works*, Marzano, Robert J., Pickering, Debra J., and Pollack, Jane E. (2001).

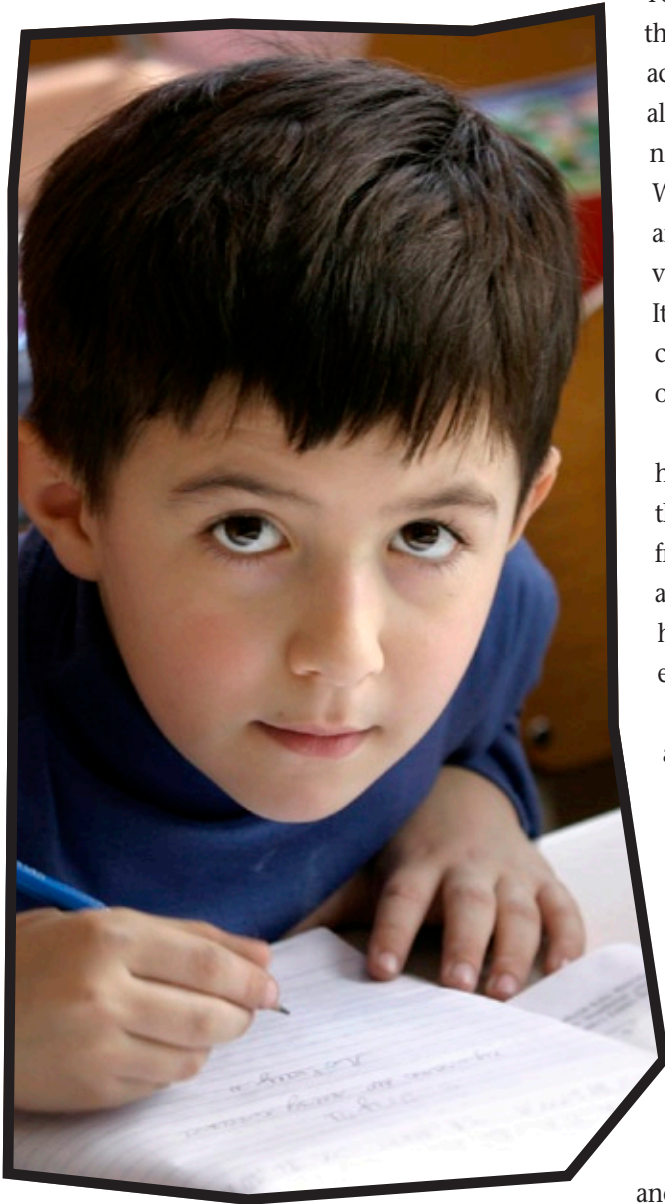
The score sheet has attributes (multi-facets) for students to show evidence of growth, according to the rubric, in their DP in such areas as math, science, writing, reading, spelling and social studies. Other areas to demonstrate growth are selection of artifacts and reflections, visual appearance, self-directed learning, Standards and file management. I conferred individually with each child every time I collected their DP, with their DP and score sheet open on my computer. We entered a score, according to the Digital Portfolio Rubric, directly onto the spreadsheet for each facet. I programmed the spreadsheet (see Example 3 at left) to average all of the facets together, and also to average just the Self-Directed entries.

This conference time together gave my students and me a chance to discuss their products, thinking, understandings, misconceptions, and our expectations for their work, as well as the technology and to set goals for the next three weeks. Before our conference, students filled out the score sheet according to their appraisal of their own work. As we conferred, students took notes in their DP notebook, so we could refer to them in the future. I immediately created a PDF of the scored Multifaceted Score Sheet as an artifact, and expected it to be in their DP and a reflection the next time I collected DPs. Students used the rubric and score sheet in all of our student-led conferences with their parents. At the end of the school year, I prepared a DVD for each student with the periodic copies

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# Digital Portfolios

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of their DPs for our Digital Portfolio Display and Discussion Parent Night. Students had a laptop computer on their desks and parents rotated to the desks, so students displayed and discussed their learning over the school year. Students were amazed and excited about their own progress throughout the school year, and this became evident as they wrote and practiced their scripts for the Parent Night. The parents were impressed and grateful to have a chronicle of their student's learning.

For social studies, I have a project based learning unit for each period of early American history we study. For example, for the Revolutionary War unit, each group designs and writes a storyboard and script for creating a claymation-type, stop action video. I post all of the necessary materials, contracts, pre-assessment, directions, and state and local Standards for all curricular areas on Blackboard, so students have constant access to the materials. In school, each group decides on a name for their wiki so I can create the wiki where only the group participants and I have access to their group wiki. Wikipedia is an example of a public, large-scale wiki. The wiki is essentially a website where group members' contributions are time-stamped, attributed to each author and where they decide on how they will plan and accomplish the stop action video, as well as post their ideas and understandings about the Revolutionary War, based on the state and local Standards. It's essential for my students to be well aware of the Standards, because they are responsible to demonstrate through their choice of digital artifacts and their Reflections as to how they meet and most often exceed the Standards. This process is one that captivated Matthew and consistently encouraged him to care more about the quality of his work.

As a class, we also read the novel, *Johnny Tremain*. I opened a class blog to conduct online assignments integrating higher level thinking skills, (cause/effect chain of events, MindMapping vocabulary, comparing and contrasting events in the book with actual historical events, analyzing characters, plot, creating metaphors, etc.) and creating Essential Questions from Standards of multiple disciplines. Our science unit during our study of the Revolutionary War was Weather Patterns and our math unit was about statistics and graphs. We analyzed how weather patterns and geography influenced the history and decisions that were made during the Revolutionary War. I compiled statistics and compiled a graph of how each student used Blackboard. Students analyzed and reflected on their own statistics and graph in their DP.

By embedding Standards, learning goals and objectives (Marzano, 2009) across the curriculum into each project, I was able to see each student's understandings and also who contributed what and when to the final products via the wikis, blogs, and Discussion Boards. I had quite an abundance and assortment of formative assessment opportunities throughout each unit. When the students had completed their projects I exported the wikis, blogs and Discussion Boards as a PDF and made them available on our school server or on Blackboard so that each child could retrieve and then insert their own artifacts and write Reflections in their DP. Since all curricular areas were covered in our Revolutionary War study, many students created a separate web page in their DP and called it their "Revolutionary War Showcase." The projects were long term, so I had my students write in their Digital Portfolio Notebook almost daily, to help them document their learning more accurately. Blackboard made it simple to create the wikis and blogs, since it is essentially a web editor, very similar to KompoZer. Students had access to the source code and were able to write in HTML, as well. This project allowed students to work to their abilities and challenge themselves in the process. I saw great progress in Matthew's writing abilities, his interest in working cooperatively and collaboratively and his increasing willingness to produce quality products.

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# Digital Portfolios

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Using DPs is a powerful way to bring new ways for students (and teachers) to document their progress throughout their educational journey. The DP is a vehicle to restructure efforts on authentic student learning and assessment that cultivate positive attitudes, perceptions and development of Habits of Mind. The technology opens the floodgates for students to take control of their learning and understanding, providing opportunities for differentiation, and allowing the classroom to



## Resources:

Costa, Arthur and Kallick, Bena, Eds., (2000), *Discovering and Exploring Habits of Mind*, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Costa, Arthur, Ed., Marzano, Robert, (2001), *Developing Minds, A Resource for Teaching Thinking*, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Costa, Arthur, (2008), *The School as a Home for the Mind*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Costa, Arthur and Kallick, Bena, Eds., (2009), *Habits of Mind Across the Curriculum*, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Costa, Arthur and Kallick, Bena, Eds., (2004), *Integrating and Sustaining Habits of Mind*, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. 15

Costa, Arthur and Kallick, Bena, Eds., (2009), *Leading and Learning with Habits of Mind: Sixteen Essential Characteristics for Success*, Alexandria, VA: Association For Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, Robert J., Kendall, John S., (2008), *Designing & Assessing Educational Objectives*, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, Robert J., (2009), *Designing and Teaching Learning Goals and Objectives*, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, Robert J., (2010), *Formative Assessment & Standards-Based Grading*, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Pitler, Howard, Hubbell, Elizabeth R., Kuhn, Matt, Malenoski, Kim, (2007). *Using Technology with Classroom Instruction That Works*, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Thompson, Michael Clay (2010), <http://www.royalfireworkspress.com/>

become more dynamic (Pitler, Hubbell, Kuhn, and Malenoski 2007). Even when the technology didn't work the first time, the children persisted to make it work. Matthew's self confidence, willingness to learn and openness to new learning increased so much that the quality of his work greatly improved.

Digital Portfolios are dynamic, reconfigurable, accurate and authentic chronicles of student learning. They provide on-demand access to the products of student learning for consideration, submission, evaluation and expansion as part of their individual knowledge library. Each student included personal information about themselves, especially on their home page, that I would not have otherwise learned. Metacognition linked to past learning is the power within digital portfolios. It is the students' reflecting (metacogitating) on their learning linked to future lessons that distinguishes a digital portfolio from a digital scrapbook (historical chronicles). Within metacognition are the processes of specifying goals, process monitoring, monitoring clarity, and monitoring accuracy (Marzano, Kendall, 2008). Digital Portfolios reveal the "containerization" of knowledge where the container is virtual and "morphable" but the learning is real, durable, reflective and measurable, initiating individualized, purposeful collections of student work, technological wonders and powerful tools. Digital Portfolios compelled me to update my teaching "playlist" to teach the Rileys, to constantly rethink my Teacher Research question, interleaving research-based Best Practices and technology applications creating a rich and exciting environment for orchestrating active student learning, for and by the 21st century learners.

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# President's Letter

Once a year, members of the VAG board attend a State Affiliates Conference sponsored by the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) in Washington DC. The conference provides an opportunity to network with associations across the United States and to learn about current developments and initiatives in the field. The conference concludes with scheduled meetings with our two senate offices as well as the offices of congressmen across the state of Virginia.

This year, Kelly Hedrick, president-elect, and I attended the conference and then met with our Virginia legislative representatives on Capitol Hill. Our message was twofold: 1. Please sign the *Dear Colleague Letter* in support of continuing the current level of Javits funding and 2. Support a Talent Development Act that will be introduced as part of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

I mention these because as a state organization one of our goals is to *promote advocacy and legislative efforts to ensure that all gifted students receive a quality education*. As we all know, a major drawback of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (United States Department of Education [USDOE], 2001) is its focus on minimum proficiency and its lack of attention to students who have already gained proficiency and are ready to achieve at a higher level. The Talent Development Act addresses this shortfall and supports the need to find advanced academic potential in all groups of learners so that they may reach their full academic potential through four key emphases:

1. Assessments should show learning gains for all students to include the most advanced learners.
2. States will be required to use Title II funds for preparing all teachers with the knowledge, skills, and practices that are an integral part of gifted education pedagogy.
3. Schools will be required to describe how they will use Title I funds to find and nurture gifted potential in underserved populations. The Rural Education Achievement Program will be expanded to support gifted and talented students in rural communities.
4. A National Research and Dissemination Center will be established which will use existing Javits funds to develop best practices in gifted education through research and data collection.

Advocacy is critical and this is an important time to write to your congressmen and senators and request that they support these two important initiatives. Also, consider inviting them to visit the gifted and talented programs in your schools and districts so they will have an opportunity to see firsthand the difference that a gifted education can make.

*Carol Horn*



The  
**MANY FACES**  
of  
**GIFTEDNESS**

**October 20-22, 2011**  
**Williamsburg, Virginia**  
[www.vagifted.org](http://www.vagifted.org)

## VAG 2010-2012 Board of Directors

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Beverly Jackson	Professional Region II
Jenni Jones	Parent Region III
Susan Leggett	Professional Region III
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Margaret Gilhooley	Professional Region IV East
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Krista Hogan	Professional Region V
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Kathryn Olive	Parent Region VII
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Carmen Jones	Parent Region VIII
Gay Little	Professional Region VIII
Kimberley Chandler	College of William & Mary
Tonya Moon	University of Virginia
Lori Lenz	Virginia Consortium for Gifted

# From the Executive Director

## News from NAGC

Funding for the Javits program has been eliminated for 2011 as part of the final deal made the week of April 11th between the White House and Congress to fund federal agencies and programs through September 30, 2011. Although this small program has received funding for more than 20 years, it couldn't withstand the intense pressure to cut programs that didn't have both White House and congressional support.

In response to the news, NAGC President Ann Robinson said, "NAGC is extremely disappointed that the continuing resolution will eliminate the sole federal program focused on meeting the needs of gifted students. At the very time we should be redoubling our commitment to these students – especially to advanced students from underserved backgrounds – Congress and the White House have chosen to perpetuate this neglect. This is a classic example of making short-sighted, short-term decisions rather than taking the long view of our nation's need to invest in the development of talented human capital."

New federal gifted education legislation, the TALENT Act, was introduced on April 15 in both the House and Senate by Senators Chuck Grassley (Iowa) and Bob Casey (PA) and Representatives Elton Gallegly (CA-24) and Donald Payne (NJ-10). The bipartisan legislation focuses on the four critical areas for federal attention: accountability, professional development, underserved gifted students, and research and dissemination of best practices.

"As a nation, we have neglected our gifted and talented and high-potential students for far too long, to our detriment. Not only do our students continue to lag behind the world on the most recent international tests, but few U.S. students are reaching the highest levels on state, national and international tests, a sign we are not focusing on developing advanced talent in our schools. The TALENT Act is a meaningful and cost-effective solution to this problem," said NAGC President Ann Robinson. For more information go to <http://www.nagc.org/index.aspx?id=7804>

Please contact your Members of Congress through their online email forms (<http://www.house.gov/> and <http://www.senate.gov/>) and urge them to support advanced achievement as a pillar of federal education policy by cosponsoring the TALENT Act.

## VAG Fall Conference 2011

Put October 20-22, 2011 on your calendar and plan to attend the 14th Virginia Conference, *The Many Faces of Gifted*. You will have a choice of one of four sessions for the Thursday Pre-Conference session and over 90 sessions to choose from Friday and Saturday. Exhibitors will bring you the latest materials for use with your gifted learners. Read the overview in this newsletter and register for the 2011 conference.

Liz Nelson



# 'All Children Led Ahead'? *Helping Gifted Students Soar.*

by David Winship

Reprinted with permission from the *Virginia Journal of Education*, February 2011.

*David Winship, a member of the Washington County Education Association, is retiring this year after 29 years as a K-12 librarian and county-wide elementary gifted education facilitator. He also served on the board of directors of the Virginia Association for the Gifted.*

I've been in education all my life and come from a long line of educators. Over the last 30 years, I've taught gifted students, raised two daughters who were identified as gifted, and coordinated a rural school district's gifted program. Through these decades, I've seen, contributed to and struggled with how we teach gifted children – as a parent, teacher and administrator.

We all have gifts. We unwrap them at different times and in different ways. Individual potential is not always evident, does not always look the same, and does not always manifest itself at the same time. Our challenge with gifted education is to identify individual gifts, provide opportunities for “unwrapping” those gifts, and provide the environment within which those gifts can develop.

An important feature in the identification of gifted students is the manner by which we evaluate their abilities and efforts. The state requires that we use a multiple criterion approach, one not relying solely on a single test score. Tests are valuable in determining both how a child thinks and reasons, as well as what a child knows. However, tests don't show the whole story. Behavioral observation, by both teachers and parents, and student products are valuable elements in the evaluation. In gifted evaluations, tests don't identify students; people do.

Testing is big in schools these days, and the biggest test of all is the Standards of Learning test. The SOL tests are created to see how much of what is taught is retained by students. A criterion-referenced test can be considered a concrete ceiling test, one that does not allow students to demonstrate what they know or know how to do, only testing whether the student has learned what has been taught.

The magic 600 score of perfection is being reached more and more by our students who are well prepared for the SOL tests. There are “600 Clubs” with plaques in the hallways of our schools recognizing students who achieved perfect scores. The students are proud. The school is proud. The parents are proud. They are all rightfully proud for these students learning what they were directly taught. The most we ask of students is to make a 600. A high score on a criterion-referenced test does not mean the same as a high score on a norm-referenced test. The criterion-referenced test is not an indicator of gifted potential. It is an indicator of “good studentness.” This is a reason that one could term gifted education in Virginia as “No Child Left Ahead.”

I've heard from many administrators and teachers over the years, particularly from those who have a hard time justifying the extra effort for appropriate educational opportunities for gifted students, that “they will make it anyway.” That is only partially true. Gifted students will make something anyway. They will have accomplishments, but they may not reach their potential. They may not make it in a socially acceptable manner. They may not be “left ahead.”

The gifted student who is unchallenged may very well find his gifted abilities expressed in other ways, ones which we don't particularly want to see. We have students who have decided that if they're going to have to endure fifth grade material when what interests them is 10th grade or 12th grade topics, or what interests the high-schooler who already understands algebra is calculus or computer programming, these students will simply shut down or go their own way. Some will fail unchallenging or uninteresting subjects as they pursue their own passions.

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# Students Soar

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We are doing some things right in gifted education. We do recognize that compacting the curriculum and offering opportunities for independent, focused study are valuable. We do accelerate students by offering courses further along the sequence. However, we sometimes stumble when we don't have the next courses in the sequence available. Magnet schools and Governor's Schools are our ultimate pull-out programs. Gifted students with these opportunities, whether on-site or online, have valuable, appropriate experiences. Yet these opportunities are not available everywhere.

The most successful avenue we've found for gifted education is the one we use in our athletic programs. Those students who are recognized as having kinesthetic gifts, which translates into athletic ability, are engaged in separate training programs which nurture their abilities. They're regularly lauded for their accomplishments and have regular opportunities for showcasing their abilities. When their gifts are nurtured to the fullest of their abilities, the opportunities for further developing beyond high school are presented. If all our academically and artistically gifted students had opportunities like those modeled by athletic programs, we would truly be teaching our gifted students.

Teachers often struggle with gifted students, partly because they present in such varied ways. Sometimes gifted behavior is hard to notice when focused on following the prescribed pacing timetable to cover content before the SOL tests. The gifted child that challenges the regular classroom teacher can be a difficult child, the in-your-face student who is constantly asking off-the-subject questions. The distracted child who needs to pay more attention is often more interested in pursuing what the teacher mentioned five minutes ago, but which has long been forgotten by other students. The bored, troublesome child who needs discipline does not respond to standard discipline because he needs to develop internal discipline, not receive external, punitive discipline. The quiet, shy child at the back of the room never answers because she already knows the answer and figures she'll let another student answer.

We have students with gifts and abilities ready to be unwrapped, nurtured and developed. Given the appropriate attention and opportunity, they will gain the skills and knowledge to realize their individual potential. Our challenge is to correct the course from "no child left ahead" to "all children led ahead." Here are some ways you can help that happen: Teach students, not subjects. Remember this, whether you teach third grade or algebra. Gifted students, if they're interested, may have learned more recent developments than you know. Use their interests as springboards for furthering their (and your) learning.

Projects, involving both process and product, are a way of students expressing and you assessing their knowledge. A key element of project-based inquiry learning is to provide opportunities for students to pursue their own interests. A good example of this is interdisciplinary reading with science and social science assignments.

Important elements in project-based learning:

- Projects are tangible; they can be reports, demonstrations, experiments, presentations.
- Projects should take time. They should be done in stages, including outlines, drafts, feedback, correction/improvement, and delivery.
- Projects involve skill development as much as knowledge. For this reason, there is a potentially steep learning curve which can be frustrating and a real learning experience for a gifted student who has previously "gotten it" easily.
- The most important part of the project may be the process rather than the product.

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# Students Soar

*continued from page 10*



Use gifted projects as opportunities for piloting activities that may be appropriate for all students. Some of my best programs, particularly in social studies, were initially presented for a gifted audience, then adapted for the mainstream classroom.

“Personal best” is a valuable athletic mindset, a concept in track events that bears transference to gifted education. For a student to recognize that what she or he is learning is for their own self-interest, self-improvement, and self-worth is a valuable lesson. This allows the student to recognize that there is “room for improvement,” which likely will be the most constructive comment that a teacher can give to a gifted student. This also assists in the development of internal motivation, which is the only motivation that really works, as well as internal discipline, which is also the only discipline that really works.

Failure is an important learning tool for all students, particularly gifted students who are often perfectionists. Children need to learn, from the earliest age, how to fail. Many students have developed a fear of failing, partly because passing and failing are the only options in our educational system. We're getting better at recognizing that there are different learning styles and different intelligences and these differences may be spread throughout your classes.

Differentiation: I think we've all been through a variety of professional development programs on this. I recognize its difficulty, because it can become “one more thing.” Consider it “one different thing.” Remember the value of pre-testing. Evaluating what students already know and don't know guides the remainder of the lesson. If you can carve out opportunities for compacting the curriculum because students already grasp some concepts, you have time for project and in-depth learning. The shelves of most libraries are valuable sources for differentiated instruction. Many of the nonfiction books, particularly the historical ones, are often unused but still have very useful information. Allow the different projects to be in lieu of, not in addition to, the regular assignment. This is what differentiated instruction means.

Rubrics can be introduced early as a tool for development, improvement and evaluation. Uses of multiple criteria for evaluation, a tenet of gifted education evaluation, can also be a valuable “yardstick” within the classroom. Recognize that a single test is not going to determine or evaluate what a student knows or is able to do, and have criteria as to how the student is going to be evaluated.

Skills for learning are required for independent study and, for some reason, we usually expect that the student gained those skills earlier. But it takes practice. In self-directed and project learning, the important aspects of editing and self-correcting can be very difficult for students. Many gifted students who are cruising through school have become very hurried and, in the process, very sloppy. This shows in their handwriting, their visual presentation, and their inquiry. Someone has to help them sharpen their skills. Encourage and require drafts and re-doing and editing. Encourage and require sketches and mock-ups before the final product. Please, please, do not post projects with misspelled words.

Know your students' past and anticipate their future. This considers what they have already learned and experienced in previous grades, including what activities have been successfully matched to their learning style and abilities. Know that in the future, if compacting and acceleration have occurred, you will have to accommodate and continue the acceleration. This may require school-wide and school system adaptation, but it will work for the better in the long run.

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# Students Soar

*continued from page 11*



Reality-what a concept! This is for all classrooms: Tie your lessons to daily relevance. If students can see a use for the day's lesson or can relate to something they learned during the day on the bus ride home, you have hooked the student into learning. Otherwise, lessons can be random activities lost in a sea of stimulation.

Emotions are real. This is a point that influences all other suggestions. The social and emotional needs of gifted students are very real, sometimes heightened, and often hidden. Gifted students' heightened sensitivity to the needs of others may indicate that they have a heightened need for attention themselves. Often, the students' peers will be ones who will alert adults to this need. Alertness to changes in mood and attitude is something all teachers need. Social stigmas and social perceptions within students' still-developing brains mean they sometimes act in unexpected ways. We must respond in an understanding and, hopefully, supportive manner.

## VAG Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ FaxNo. \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Check as appropriate:

\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of school division your child/children attend)

\_\_\_\_ Professional \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of school division where you are employed)

\_\_\_\_ 1 Year \$20.00 \_\_\_\_ 2 Years \$35.00 \_\_\_\_ *New Member* \_\_\_\_ *Renewal – Membership No.* \_\_\_\_\_

### **VAG Newsletter Dates and Deadlines**

The VAG Newsletter is published online four times each year. Deadlines for items are May 15, August 15 and November 15 and February 15. We invite you to submit your suggestions and/or articles you have written and would like to share with VAG members through this newsletter. Parents and teachers are especially encouraged to submit their children's original creative writing pieces. Email articles or photographs to [vagifted@comcast.net](mailto:vagifted@comcast.net) or mail to VAG, P. O. Box 26212, Richmond, VA 23260-6212. Black and white or color prints can be used, but will not be returned to you.

**Visit our web site – [www.vagifted.org](http://www.vagifted.org)**

# The Many Faces of Giftedness

October 20-22, 2011

Williamsburg Marriott • 50 Kingsmill Road • Williamsburg, Virginia



The Virginia Association for the Gifted (VAG) will host the 14th Virginia Conference on Gifted Education for learners of all ages and professions. We promise to stimulate your thinking, extend your knowledge base, and provide opportunities for you to network and share ideas. The following goals will guide us in delivering to each of you a conference filled with many, varied offerings to meet your unique learning needs as a parent or educator:

- To provide innovative strategies and best practices for educating gifted learners
- To share ideas about how to challenge gifted learners within the SOL and NCLB frameworks
- To facilitate networking opportunities
- To explore exhibits with the latest materials

## Pre-conference for Thursday, October 20, 2011 – 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Choose one from these four sessions:

### 1• Total School Cluster Grouping: A Research-based Model for Improving Student Achievement, Identification Equity, and Teacher Practices

*Marcia Gentry, Ph.D., Director of Education Resource Institute and Professor of Educational Studies at Perdue University*  
Target Audience: Teachers and Administrators K-6

Total School Cluster Grouping (TSCG) is an effective, research-based programming model for use in schools. By focusing on differentiation and flexible grouping, it provides full-time services to gifted students and benefits all students and teachers in the school. Research on TSCG has shown that student achievement increases, teachers widely implement gifted education strategies with all students, more students are identified as high-achieving, and fewer students are identified as low-achieving (including students from economically disadvantaged families and diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds). Participants will learn why and how to successfully implement TSCG and leave with site-specific tools to increase the achievement and motivation of all learners, while providing the academic challenge and individual responsiveness essential to gifted learners.

*Dr. Gentry's* research has focused on the use of cluster grouping and differentiation; the application of gifted education pedagogy to improve teaching and learning; student perceptions school, and on non-traditional services and underserved populations—areas in which she has over 50 publications. She developed and studied the Total School Cluster Grouping Model and is engaged in continued research on its effects concerning student achievement and identification and on teacher practices, most recently beginning a five-year, national scale-up study with 110 schools across the county funded by the Javits program. Dr. Gentry is concluding a three-year study of the effects of enrichment programming on children from low-income families. She currently works with colleagues to make developing talents among Native American children a national priority.



Marcia Gentry

### 2• Curriculum for Underserved Populations: Implications of Research for Practice

*Kimberley L. Chandler, Ph.D., Center for Gifted Education, College of William & Mary*  
Target Audience: Teachers and Administrators K-12

In order for the needs of underserved gifted students to be addressed effectively, it is essential that curriculum interventions be designed and delivered in specific ways. In this session, the presenter will delineate the key elements of research-based interventions so that practitioners will have an easy reference for directing their efforts. The session will include information regarding the efficacy of various curriculum interventions with this target population, including a review of the extant materials and their common features. The presenter will also share practical, evidence-based recommendations that have been derived from the research for use by various stakeholders.

*Dr. Chandler* is the Curriculum Director at the Center for Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary. Kimberley completed her Ph.D. in Educational Policy, Planning, and Leadership with an emphasis in gifted education at the College of William



Kimberley Chandler

and Mary. Her professional background includes teaching gifted students in a variety of settings, serving as an administrator of a school district gifted program, providing professional development training for teachers and administrators, and leading academic review teams for the Virginia Department of Education. She has also taught gifted education endorsement courses for The College of William and Mary, the University of Virginia, the College of Charleston, and CaseNEX, Inc. She has conducted workshops on a variety of topics for parents, teachers, and administrators in numerous states and in several foreign countries. Kimberley is the past chair of the NAGC Early Childhood Network, co-chair of the NAGC Education Committee, and Member-at-Large Representative of the AERA Research on Giftedness and Talent SIG.

### 3• **Crafting the Warp and the Weft: Weaving Vertically and Horizontally Aligned Educational Service Options for Gifted Learners**

*Gail Fischer Hubbard and Joan Brownlee, Prince William County Public Schools*

**Target Audience: Teachers and Administrators K-12**

Developing and maintaining continuous and sequential services for gifted learners in a school division with limited resources can be a daunting task. Learn how one school system uses collegial agreement on big ideas and concepts to construct vertical alignment of educational service options and carefully designed templates, rubrics, and plans to structure horizontal alignment of service options. Procedures for assessing academic growth are an integral component of the design. Participants will receive copies of the templates, the rubrics, and the plans used to weave a design for continuous and sequential gifted education service options as well as the assessment procedures developed to assess academic growth in gifted learners.

**Mrs. Hubbard** has been the Supervisor of Gifted Education for Prince William County Public Schools since 1986. Before that time, she was a high school gifted education resource teacher for a decade. Mrs. Hubbard has served as the President of Northern Virginia Council for Gifted/Talented Education, as President of the Virginia Association for the Gifted, as Chairperson of the Virginia Consortium of Administrators of Gifted Programs, and as Chairperson of the Virginia Advisory Committee for the Education of the Gifted.

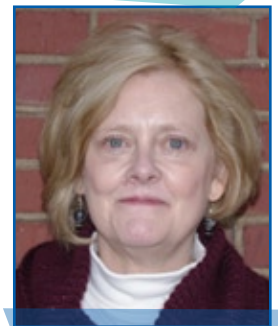
Mrs. Hubbard received her A.B. from Bryn Mawr College and her Masters of Arts in Teaching from Harvard University. She taught in Washington, D. C., in Niagara Falls, New York, and in Ithaca, New York before moving to Virginia.

**Mrs. Brownlee** has been the Gifted Education Specialist for Prince William County Public Schools since 2005. Prior to that she was a gifted education resource teacher in Prince William County. Ms. Brownlee is the author of The Products Toolbag, a rubric-based assessment tool for grades kindergarten through grade eight. She is a co-author of Geofinity, a math adventure for elementary students. Ms. Brownlee serves as treasurer for the Northern Virginia Council for Gifted/Talented Education.

Ms. Brownlee received a B.A. from Washington University in St. Louis. She also holds a Masters of Liberal Studies from Mary Washington College and a Masters of Arts in Education from George Mason University.



Gail Fischer Hubbard



Joan P. Brownlee

### 4• **Assessing for Growth in the 21st Century**

*Carol V. Horn, Ph.D., Fairfax County Public Schools*

**Target Audience: Teachers and Administrators K-12**

How do we account for the achievement and progress of gifted learners in today's classrooms? How do you design an assessment system that incorporates 21st Century skills and accommodates high levels of performance? Participants will explore and identify criteria for student performance that documents in-depth knowledge, an advanced application of skills, and a deep understanding of the content, issues, and problems inherent in a field, subject area, or discipline. They will discover how high quality curriculum, complex performances, real-world applications, and/or simulations may be integrated into the learning process to prepare students for the challenges of the 21st century and to document and report advanced intellectual growth.

**Dr. Horn** is coordinator of Advanced Academic Programs for Fairfax County Public Schools in Northern Virginia. She has worked in gifted education for over 20 years and is a National Board Certified Teacher. Carol has a Master of Education in Educational Psychology with an Emphasis on Gifted from the University of Virginia and a doctorate in Teacher Preparation and Special Education from The George Washington University. She is the 2002 recipient of the Hollingsworth Award from the National Association for Gifted Children for outstanding research study in the field of gifted education. Dr. Horn has worked extensively to develop and implement the Young Scholars model, a comprehensive approach to finding and nurturing advanced academic potential in young learners from underrepresented populations. In 2010 she received the first Outstanding Leader Award by the Center of Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary.



Carol V. Horn

## Friday and Saturday Conference Sessions for Parents, Teachers, and Administrators

Over 90 sessions presented by educators from across the Commonwealth, focusing on an array of offerings including differentiation strategies to enhance the fine arts, language arts, social studies, mathematics, science and technology; meeting the needs of students through an understanding of social-emotional and special populations issues; and examining staff development training. On Friday there will be a special strand of sessions for administrators of gifted programs and on Saturday a special strand for parents of gifted learners will be offered.

### Friday Conference Day, October 21, 2011 – 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

#### **8:00 a.m. – Keynote Address – Sally M. Reis, Ph.D., University of Connecticut** **Why Gifted and Enrichment Programs Make a Difference in Students' Lives**

Several recent studies provide compelling evidence about the difference that gifted programs make in the lives of children and youth. This keynote presents exciting evidence that gifted programs can profoundly influence the lives of our students and suggests ways to help students develop their gifts and talents by focusing on their strengths and interests.

**Dr. Reis** is a Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor and a Teaching Fellow in the Educational Psychology Department at the University of Connecticut where she also serves as Principal Investigator for the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. She was a teacher for 15 years, 11 of which were spent working with students on the elementary, junior high, and high school levels. She has authored more than 250 articles, books, book chapters, and monographs and technical reports.

Her research interests are related to enrichment and differentiation of instruction, as well as under-achievement. She is also interested in special populations of gifted and talented students, including: students with learning disabilities, gifted females and diverse groups of talented students. She has spent most of her career helping to implement Schoolwide Enrichment Model programs 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.

She has traveled extensively conducting workshops and providing professional development for school districts on gifted education, enrichment programs, and talent development programs. She is a past President of the National Association for Gifted Children and a Fellow of the American Psychological Association.



Sally M. Reis

### Saturday Conference Day, October 22, 2011 – 8:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

#### **8:45 a.m. – Mini-keynote Address – Tracy L. Cross, Ph.D., College of William and Mary** **The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Students**

This presentation will introduce issues in the social and emotional development of gifted students. Identity formation, perfectionism, feelings of difference, and unchallenging school work will be emphasized. Common coping strategies will also be presented. Strategies and techniques for helping parents will conclude the session.

**Dr. Cross** is the Jody and Layton Smith Professor of Psychology and Gifted Education and the Executive Director of the William and Mary Center for Gifted Education. Previously he served as the George and Frances Ball Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Gifted Studies in Teachers College at Ball State University and as the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, Research, and Assessment. He is the editor of the *Journal for the Education of the Gifted* and president emeritus of CEC TAG. For nine years he served as the Executive Director of the Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics and Humanities, a residential high school for gifted adolescents. He has published four books, well over 100 articles and book chapters and received the distinguished service award from both the National Association for Gifted Children and the Council for Exceptional Children division, The Association for the Gifted.



Tracy Cross

### Special Parent Strand on Saturday, October 22

Attend the conference strand for parents on Saturday, October 22, 8:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m., for only \$30 per person. *See registration form for sign-up.*

### Exhibits

Exhibits will be open throughout the conference on Friday and Saturday.

## Conference Registration Form

(Please print or type)

**Registration is Limited**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership # \_\_\_\_\_ Attending Conference primarily as:  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  Teacher  Student  
 \_\_\_\_\_  Parent  Administrator  
 \_\_\_\_\_  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 City & State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ School Division \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Confirmation of registration will only be made to e-mail addresses.)

### Conference Fees

**VAG Cancellation Policy** – To receive a refund, cancellations must be received *in writing* by the VAG office no later than October 6, 2011. All refunds are subject to a \$25 processing fee and will be issued after January 1, 2012.

	<b>VAG Member</b>		<b>Non-Member</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<i>(Postmarked before Oct. 1)</i>	<i>(After Oct. 1)</i>	<i>(Before Oct. 1)</i>	<i>(After Oct. 1)</i>	
<b>Total Conference Package</b>					
<b>Thursday-Saturday</b>	\$225	\$250	\$255	\$280	\$ _____
(Includes Thursday Pre-Conference Sessions, Friday and Saturday Conference Sessions, Friday morning coffee/pastries, luncheon and Saturday continental breakfast)					
<b>Thursday Only (1:00 - 4:00 p.m.)</b>	\$ 90	\$115	\$120	\$145	\$ _____

**Thursday Sessions – Choose One:**

- \_\_\_ (1) Total School Cluster Grouping: A Research-based model for improving student achievement, identification equity, and teacher practices
- \_\_\_ (2) Curriculum for Underserved Populations: Implications of Research for Practice
- \_\_\_ (3) Crafting the Warp and the Weft: Weaving Vertically and Horizontally Aligned Educational Service Options for Gifted Learners
- \_\_\_ (4) Assessing Growth in the 21st Century

<b>Friday (8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.)</b>	\$195	\$220	\$225	\$250	\$ _____
<b>and Saturday (8:45 a.m.- 12:15 p.m.)</b>					
(Includes Friday and Saturday Conference Sessions, Friday morning coffee/pastries, luncheon and Saturday continental breakfast)					

**Special Parent Registration for Saturday Only (No Meals and No Refunds) \$30** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**VAG Dues:   1   year/\$20     2   years/\$35      Member Renewal      New Member** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Please mail your membership application with your conference payment and conference registration form.)

Membership Number \_\_\_\_\_ (Must include membership number for member rate; will be verified)  
 If you wish to join VAG and receive the member discount, please send your payment and membership application (on page 12) with your conference registration.

**Total Payment Due:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Payment: \_\_\_\_\_ Please make checks payable to: **VAG**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Personal Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Send registration and payment to: VAG Conference Registration  
 \_\_\_\_\_ School District Check # \_\_\_\_\_ PO Box 26212  
 \_\_\_\_\_ School District Purchase Order # \_\_\_\_\_ Richmond, VA 23260-0212

- Please note:**
1. Purchase orders are accepted in good faith that a check for full payment will be received within 30 days.
  2. Mail-in registrations will not be accepted after October 6, 2011.
  3. On-site registrations may not include meals.
  4. Hotel reservations must be made directly with the Williamsburg Marriott: 757-220-2500 or 800-442-3654.

**Credit Cards accepted with On-line Registration.**

**Hotel Reservations:** (Please note that check-in for the hotel will begin after 4:00 p.m. – You will not be able to check-in prior to the 1:00 p.m. pre-conference session on Thursday.) For hotel reservations at the Marriott Hotel, call 757-220-2500 or toll free 800-442-3654. Ask for **Virginia Association for the Gifted Seminar room block**. Single and double rooms will cost \$138 plus applicable taxes. Reserve your room on-line at [www.vagifted@comcast.net](http://www.vagifted@comcast.net). The cut-off date for hotel reservations is Thursday, September 29, 2011.

**Directions:** I-64 (East or West) towards Williamsburg; Take exit 242-A to Rt. 60 East; turn right at 4th light (Kingsmill Road) off Route 60 East.