



Heather Baskin, Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Programming at D51

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Important Dates

GT Enrichment Scholarship Due

May 7, Before 4 pm
GT Office, Emerson Bldg.
East Modular

Letter from the Coordinator:

It is time to start thinking about summer and summer break. Our community has many great ways for students to get involved during the summer. Visit our [GT Website](#) to get a list of possibilities, and almost all of these have possible scholarship opportunities. Want more help and guidance? The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) has this to say:

It's hard to know how much and what kind of activity your child needs over the summer -- scheduled family activities, community camps, academic programs, or residential camps. That can be determined by you and your child, but it is known that children who participate in summer activities, experience learning gains and those who do not, lose some learning gains from the past school year.

There are many considerations when thinking about camps and programs your child might attend. Here are a few things to consider when looking at camps or programs.

The best camps:

- ⇒ Are physically and emotionally safe and welcoming places, with adequate staffing
- ⇒ Provide a variety of activities --academic, physical, and social – based on a single goal or philosophy.
- ⇒ If academically oriented, provide challenge and allow your child to explore higher-level concepts than they might get during the school year
- ⇒ Provide active rather than passive learning experiences that build on your child's interests
- ⇒ Have staff who are trained in the academic and emotional needs of gifted students as well as those from diverse backgrounds.
- ⇒ Have trained counselors who can help students who have difficulties finding friends or joining in activities
- ⇒ Are flexible enough to meet your child's academic, athletic, or musical ability without be overwhelming
- ⇒ Have an end of session evaluation of progress made with next steps.
- ⇒ Talk with your student about the following:
 - ⇒ Is she/he ready for a residential camp or would she/he be happier coming home in the evening?
 - ⇒ Is the camp content interesting?
 - ⇒ How much structure would make her/him happiest?

For more information, including more articles and lists of summer camps nationally, visit NAGC at <https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources-parents/planning-summer>.

Leadership Team at Orchard Avenue Organizes Family STEAM Night

By Sue Dailey, GT Teacher at Orchard Avenue and Wingate Elementary Schools

Orchard Avenue Fifth Grade Leadership team embarked on a massive undertaking this school year and that was to plan and organize a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) evening for our school. The students researched STEAM activities on line. The students worked in teams of two and each group came up with a STEAM activity for our family night. The students planned the activity and came up with lists of supplies to purchase. They tried out the activity they decided upon prior to the evening. The students promoted the event by making posters of all the activities and visited each classroom to share. On STEAM evening, the students taught a variety of families how to do their chosen activity. Multiple families had the opportunity to explore activities ranging from Lego designs of famous structures to color robots. The Eureka science center also attended and had families creating a zip line. We had coding in the computer lab and, courtesy of our librarian - Aquos Board demonstrations in the library. Families were able to enjoy pizza and a raffle at the end of the evening. The leadership team worked phenomenally hard for this evening to be a success. Thank you Orchard Avenue Leadership team.



Taylor Elementary School Enters Service Learning Design Challenge

By Krisi Gustad, GT Teacher at Taylor Elementary



A group of 5th graders took on an exciting challenge at Taylor Elementary! Mrs. Gustad and Miss Fox, along with seven students, entered into the Mesa County Valley School District 51 Service-Learning Design Challenge. Our task was to identify current issues in our school and propose a policy to help solve it. We interviewed 59 people, including principals, teachers, custodians, and students. We concluded that 86% of those interviewed felt that the noise volume in the cafeteria was our school's biggest issue. We designed a policy proposal to make our cafeteria a safe and respectful place. Our implementation plan consists of four parts:

- Installing a Yacker Tracker

- Making Taylor Café Coupons

- Making videos to inform our school about the policy

- Beginning of the year meeting with Mrs. Morrell and cafeteria staff to go over the policy and expectations.

We presented our policy at the Service-Learning Design Challenge Showcase on April 18th to over 100 people! Our team was asked what we like best about participating in the Design Challenge and we all agreed that being able to work collaboratively as a team to solve a real problem in our school was the most rewarding. We look forward to fully implementing our policy by the beginning of May.



GTAC Update

By Jen Schumann, Co-Chair

The D51 Gifted-Talented Advisory Committee would like to thank all those who were present at the March 19th D51 BOE meeting as advocates of gifted youth in our community. At the meeting GTAC members highlighted the positive aspects between the D51 Learning Model and D51 gifted education services. Additionally, the committee urged awareness of forward progress regarding mapping out pathways to identification in the 14 areas of giftedness now recognized by the Colorado Department of Education. Moreover, the concerns about meeting the needs of underserved youth in our district was also an emphasis. GTAC presenters shared information about the underserved population, along with research-based considerations which had been a focus for part of the committee for the 2017-2018 year. As a volunteer committee created by the BOE to provide advisory recommendations for how to improve gifted education services in our district, GTAC shared a referral that a reallocation of GT teachers take place. Also, the committee shared concerns about forward progress in D51 GT education without a specific leader at the helm in light of the fact that eight out of thirteen areas of the state audit of the program were out of compliance.

The BOE and Superintendent asked for a continued conversation with GTAC regarding the material presented.

Since the March 19th BOE meeting, the D51 Superintendent's office has communicated to GTAC members that a decision has been made to hire a D51 Gifted-Talented Director. With the redistribution initiative taking place at the administration level in D51 to add impetus to the forward progression of the D51 Learning Model, GTAC is pleased to learn that forward movement in D51 gifted education is also perceived as relevant.

Student Work from Rim Rock Elementary

'Anonymous' by Olivia Baughman

Olivia Baughman



Olivia Baughman, 5th Grade
Rim Rock Elementary



Anna Adams, 5th Grade
Rim Rock Elementary

One Hundred Times Before

By Anna Adams

Children enter the school like they
have one hundred times before.

They swing and play like they
have one hundred times before.

The bell chimes
which means times for rhymes

The teacher takes attendance
like she has one hundred times before.

The bell rings for lunch and the
children line up like they have one hundred times before.

After lunch they grab out books
not worrying about their looks.

The final bell rings, signaling the
end of the year like it has one hundred times before.

Next year they will start all over
for the hundredth time before.