The School Counselor and Gifted Learners

By Christine Nobbe
Director of Gifted Education
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Agenda

• Who is the Gifted Learner?
• What is Gifted Education in Missouri?
• What Responsibility Does the School Counselor Have in Meeting the Needs of Gifted Learners?
• Resilience or Risk?
• Implications
STRATEGIC PLAN

Our Vision: Missouri public schools: the best choice ... the best results!

Our Mission: The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s mission is to guarantee the superior preparation and performance of every child in school and in life.

Our Goal: All Missouri students will graduate ready for success.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

A. Access, Opportunity, Equity: Provide all students access to a broad range of high-quality educational opportunities from early learning into post-high school engagement

B. Teachers and Leaders: Prepare, develop and support educators to ensure an effective teacher in every classroom and an effective leader in every school

C. Efficiency and Effectiveness: Create an internal environment of continuous improvement, effective programming and efficient business operations
Draw-a-Gifted-Student
Definition of Gifted

Section 162.675, RSMo defines gifted children as “those children who exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and learning potential as determined by competent professional evaluation to the extent that continued educational growth and stimulation could best be served by an academic environment beyond that offered through a standard grade level curriculum."

A learner who
• exhibits precocious capacity and learning potential;
• is identified by competent professionals; and
• needs an academic environment beyond standard grade level curriculum.

https://dese.mo.gov/quality-schools/gifted-education
Gifted Learners

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• exhibit precocious capacity and learning potential;
• are identified by competent professionals; and
• need an academic environment beyond standard grade level curriculum.
Gifted Education Basics

• Gifted Certified Teacher
• 150 minutes per week (grades K-8, HS is a bit different)
• Models are RRT, SCT, GRT
• Identification Process
Characteristics of Gifted Learners

- **Interests:** Intense and sometimes unusual
- **Motivation:** evidence of a desire to learn
- **Humor:** conveys and picks up on humor
- **Problem solving:** effective and inventive strategies
- **Inquiry:** questions, experiments, explores
- **Memory:** large storehouse of information
- **Imagination/Creativity:** produces many ideas, highly original
- **Insight:** quickly grasps new concepts and makes connections, senses deeper meaning
- **Reasoning:** logical approaches to figuring out solutions
- **Communication:** highly expressive (with words, number, or symbols)

Panning for Gold TABs Descriptors

The following definitions and descriptions of traits, aptitudes, and behaviors associated with the giftedness construct may be used to observe the performance of children in your classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Interests</th>
<th>Communication Skills</th>
<th>Problem-Solving Ability</th>
<th>Memory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of desire to learn.</td>
<td>Intense (sometimes unusual) interests.</td>
<td>Highly expressive; effective use of words, numbers, symbols.</td>
<td>Effective, often inventive, strategies for recognizing and solving problems.</td>
<td>Large storehouse of information on school or non-school topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description: Forces that initiate, direct and sustain individual or group behavior in order to satisfy a need or attain a goal.</td>
<td>Description: Activities, avocations, objects, etc., that have special worth or significance and are given special attention.</td>
<td>Description: Transmission and reception of signals or meanings through a system of symbols (codes, gestures, language, numbers).</td>
<td>Description: Process of determining a correct sequence of alternatives leading to a desired goal or successful task completion.</td>
<td>Description: Exceptional ability to retain and retrieve information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>How it may look:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- aspires to be somebody, to do something.</td>
<td>- demonstrates unusual or advanced insights in a topic or activity.</td>
<td>- demonstrates unusual ability to communicate verbally, physically, artistically, or symbolically.</td>
<td>- demonstrates unusual ability to devise or adapt a systematic strategy for solving problems and to change the strategy if it is not working.</td>
<td>- already knows information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- is an enthusiastic learner.</td>
<td>- is a self-starter.</td>
<td>- uses particularly apt examples, illustrations or elaborations.</td>
<td>- creates new designs, inverts.</td>
<td>- needs only 1-2 repetitions for mastery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- demonstrates persistence in pursuing or completing self-selected tasks (may be culturally influenced; evident in school or non-school activities).</td>
<td>- is beyond age group.</td>
<td>- constructs a working system of idea generation.</td>
<td>- has a wealth of information about school or non-school topics.</td>
<td>- pays attention to details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- pursues activity unceasingly.</td>
<td></td>
<td>- applies the strategy.</td>
<td>- manipulates information.</td>
<td>- is highly curious.</td>
</tr>
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<th>Humor</th>
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<td>Questions, experiments, explores.</td>
<td>Quickly grasps new concepts and makes connections; senses deeper meanings.</td>
<td>Logical approaches to figuring out solutions.</td>
<td>Produces many ideas; highly original.</td>
<td>Conveys a point and picks up on humor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description: Method or process of seeking knowledge, understanding or information.</td>
<td>Description: Sudden discovery of the correct solution following incorrect attempts based primarily on trial and error.</td>
<td>Description: Highly conscious, directed, controlled, active, intentional, forward-looking, goal oriented thought.</td>
<td>Description: Process of forming mental images of objects, qualities, situations, or relationships which aren’t immediately apparent to the senses. Problem-solving through non-traditional patterns of thinking.</td>
<td>Description: Ability to synthesize key ideas or problems in complex situations in a humorous way.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>- asks unusual questions for age.</td>
<td>- demonstrates exceptional ability to draw inferences.</td>
<td>- makes generalizations.</td>
<td>- shows exceptional ingenuity using everyday materials.</td>
<td>- has a keen sense of humor, may be gentle/harmless.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- plays around with ideas.</td>
<td>- appears to be a good guesser keenly observant.</td>
<td>- uses metaphors and analogies ... think things through in a logical manner.</td>
<td>- creates wild, seemingly silly ideas, often hilarious/ flexible.</td>
<td>- see unusual relationships.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- demonstrates extensive exploratory behavior directed toward eliciting information about materials, devices or situations.</td>
<td>- possesses heightened capacity for seeing unusual and diverse relationships.</td>
<td>- thinks critically ... comes up with plausible answers.</td>
<td>- demonstrates unusual emotional depth.</td>
<td>- demonstrates sensory awareness.</td>
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Adapted from Sandra Kaplan's "Jot Sheet."
Asynchronous Development

Develop unevenly across domains
Identifying Gifted Students
Identifying Gifted Learners

1. Universal Screening
   - All students at the targeted age group are screened

2. Further Evaluation
   - Find about 20% of the population for further evaluation

3. Individual Assessment
   - Individually assess about 10% of the original targeted population, looking for about 5% of the students

General Mental Ability - 95%ile

Caution with WISC-V FS Scores

Academic Achievement - 95%ile on nationally normed instrument

Various assessments can be used for Creativity/Reasoning/Problem Solving.

Other could be MAP scores, gifted teacher observation, portfolio, etc. Avoid general education teacher and parent ratings.
Equitable Identification of Gifted Learners

- Universal Screening
- Body of Evidence
- Identification Team
- Local Norms

Mindset of a “child find” - looking for talent, looking for evidence of giftedness, looking for potential...

The Role of the School Counselor
School Counseling Position Paper

1. Identification
   - Provide consultation in the identification of gifted students; analysis of data

2. Advocacy
   - Assist in promoting understanding of issues

3. Counseling
   - Provide individual and group counseling; provide resources to students and families

https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/PositionStatements/PS_Gifted.pdf
Position Paper Summary

• School counselors deliver a school counseling program to meet students’ academic, career, and social/emotional needs.

• Students identified as gifted and talented have unique developmental needs and special abilities, which are considered when implementing a school counseling program.

• Specifically planned educational experiences can greatly enhance the continued development of gifted and talented students.

• School counselors work in collaboration with other school personnel to maximize opportunities for gifted and talented students.
Dr. Kris Wiley’s Paper

Moving Beyond the Label

Resilience or Risk?
• Social Competence – gifted learners are fine, when there is a concern it might be due to asynchronous development and lack of peers
• Global, academic, and behavior self-concept is high
• Depression is NOT higher
• Functional Perfectionism

• Hispanic gifted youth seem to have higher rates of depression
• Physical and appearance self-concept is lower
• If suicide attempt is made, more likely to be successful
• Underachievement
Five-Factor Model of Personality

My Personality Type: The Networker

I paid $9.00 to take the online version:
https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/tests/personality/big-five-personality-test

This is new to me and I cannot share much other than my results and this from Dr. Wiley’s paper:
“In an attempt to link practice to more reliable research, the gifted community is increasingly turning to the five-factor model of personality.” Also, one study showed higher levels of Openness to Experience in gifted students and lower levels of Neuroticism (anxiety, self doubt) during adolescents. I think we need more research.
Emotional Stability
Emotional stability assesses overall emotional strength and the ability to withstand stress.

Extroversion
Extroversion refers to whether you prefer interacting with others or enjoy spending time on your own.

Openness
Open-mindedness measures the extent to which you seek out new experiences and are receptive to different views and people.
**Agreeableness**
Agreeableness refers to how likeable, approachable, and cooperative you are.

**Conscientiousness**
Conscientiousness measures how organized, reliable and rule-abiding you are.

**Impression Management**
Degree to which you responded in a socially desirable manner.

This report is intended for personal growth purposes only. Professional versions for HR professionals, coaches or therapists are available. For more information, visit [http://www.archprofile.com](http://www.archprofile.com).
Big Issues for Further Study

Diversity and Multicultural Gifted Learners
Non-binary Gender and Sexual Identity
Twice-exceptional Gifted Learners
Implications

• Address the child, not the label.
• Seek to provide peers.
• Help the school challenge gifted students academically.
• Search for diverse, multicultural, and twice exceptional gifted learners.
• Demonstrate your own intellect.
• Engage the community.
Mindsets

**Growth mindset vs Fixed mindset**

**SUCCESS**
1. I can learn anything I want to.
2. When I’m frustrated, I persevere.
3. I like to challenge myself.
4. When I fail, I learn.
5. I like being told that I try hard.
6. If my classmates succeed, I’m inspired.
7. My effort and attitude determine everything.

**FRUSTRATION**
1. I’m either good at it, or I’m not.
2. When I’m frustrated, I give up.
3. I don’t like to be challenged.
4. When I fail, I’m no good.
5. I like being told that I’m smart.
6. If my classmates succeed, I feel threatened.
7. My abilities determine everything.

**GRIT** ↔ **Learned helplessness**