

Oregon Talented and Gifted Teacher Update #7

April 8, 2009

Please forward this issue of the update to interested professionals!

Teachers may sign up for this or other newsletters at: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1843>

Past issues are also available at this website.

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1. Welcome to the TAG Teacher Update

This newsletter is designed to provide current information concerning teachers of TAG students, guidance counselors, administrators, and coordinators of TAG programs. Please let your colleagues know they can subscribe to this and other ODE content area newsletters by visiting: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1843>

2. Legal Reminder of the Month

OAR 581-022-1310-5: "Despite a student's failure to qualify under subsections (4)(a) and (b) of this rule, districts, by local policies and procedures, shall identify students who demonstrate the potential to perform at the 97th percentile." This OAR is designed to allow districts flexibility in identifying students who display characteristics of giftedness, but for whatever reason, do not demonstrate this by their scores on standardized tests. The exact procedures for this are left up to local district control, but each district needs to make sure they are identifying students in this category whenever necessary.

3. TAG Service Centers Updates

The work at the TAG Service Centers at SOESD and WOU is continuing with very positive results. SOESD has pulled together a cadre of over twenty professionals from all over Oregon who have been inundated with training on differentiated instruction. They began in December with an on-site two-day training with [Marcia Imbeau from ACS D](#). This winter and spring, the cadre has been working on completing online courses from the ASCD titled *Differentiated Instruction, Success with Differentiated Instruction, and Using Assessment in the Differentiated Classroom*. Each class takes approximately twenty hours to complete. The training will conclude in April when the cadre attends the [COSA Differentiation workshop with Carol Ann Tomlinson](#).

SOESD also supplied each cadre member with materials to use when they go back to their home regions and facilitate trainings with teachers in their area. The requirement was that each cadre member would hold at least one training session in their area before the end of June, but three of the cadre members in Klamath County, Ashland, and Sandy had actually started providing professional development in their home regions as early as February!

The TAG Service Center at WOU completed an online needs assessment and formed an advisory committee in the fall that helped inform their next steps. The highlight of their work thus far has been a two-day workshop in February that was co-sponsored with the [Business Education Compact](#). The focus of this workshop was on [Credit for Proficiency](#) models for TAG students. Diane Smith, Director of Curriculum & Instruction at Albany schools, also participated and co-presented with WOU and BEC. The grant paid for fifty teachers, TAG coordinators, and administrators to come from all over the state. There were representatives from all corners of Oregon including North Bend and La Grande. The workshop was so popular that a waitlist of over seventy people was started. This summer they are hoping to bring back teachers to work with content area experts to design proficiency-based teaching units with an emphasis on TAG learners. These units will then be available for teachers all over the state on the ODE and/or WOU website.

4. Identifying and Serving Underrepresented TAG Students

Districts all over Oregon are trying to do a better job of identifying and serving students from underrepresented populations. Do you have a success story in this area? Have you found a particular assessment instrument to be especially useful? Is there a form you've developed that has helped you to organize your evidence easily? I would

love you to share your best practices with me, and I will then include them in future newsletter articles. There are great things happening in education all over Oregon, and the more we can support each other in our efforts, the better our state will be. Please contact me at stacey.figgins@state.or.us if you have an idea or a resource you'd be willing to share.

5. Parents and Teachers Working Together to Address Stress

[This resource paper](#) from the NAGC highlights how parents and teachers can work together to identify and help reduce gifted students' stress levels.

6. Apprentice Program for Highly Capable Students

The Apprenticeship Program is a three- or four- week residential summer program in California that provides gifted high school students with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience working in professional environments with experienced and respected mentors in art, history, medicine, industrial design, science, law, and business. Placed either individually or in small groups, inquisitive and productive young people apply their talents to solve real-world problems and gain insight into a variety of career options while learning from professionals. Working as Apprentices, students reside on a college campus and experience dorm living and college life first-hand. For 2009, the three-week Apprenticeship Program dates are July 19th to August 8. The four-week program dates are July 12 to August 8. Applications and additional information about the program are available on their website at <http://www.educationaladvancement.org/index.html>. The final deadline is May 1st, 2009.

7. Publication for Advanced High School Students in *The Concord Review*

The Concord Review, Inc., was founded in March 1987 to recognize and to publish exemplary history essays by high school students in the English-speaking world. With the 76th issue (Winter 2008), 835 research papers (average 5,500 words, with endnotes and bibliography) have been published from authors in forty-four states and thirty-five other countries. **The Concord Review** remains the only quarterly journal in the world to publish the academic work of secondary students. This would be a great opportunity for high school TAG students who have done exceptional work. For more information on submitting essays [click here](#).

8. Music for Vocabulary Study

Why is it that we can't get those commercial jingles out of our heads? The strong response of music on the brain has been researched for years. Teaching students chants, raps, and songs to remember content is an effective instructional practice. Are you skeptical? I got eighth graders to sing songs about content, and they came back years later and sang them to me. If that's not a plug, I don't know what is. Here is a great resource with one-minute songs and raps you can use to teach advanced vocabulary. [Click here](#) to access the Princeton Review Vocabulary Minute.

9. Saturday Academy at Reed College in Portland

Saturday Academy provides open enrollment, enrichment classes year round for students in grades 2-12. Reed College also offers a one-week TAG camp for students

entering grades 4 or 5 in fall 2009, on the Reed College Campus (Portland) June 22 - 26. For more information contact Gail Pyle at gail.pyle@saturdayacademy.org or 503) 200-5856. You can also visit their website at <http://www.saturdayacademy.org>.

10. Online Learning Resource

Visit Funbrain.com to access learning games in subjects like math, geography, and grammar.

11. Residential TAG Camp at Southern Oregon University

ACADEMY offers stimulating academic experiences and exciting social activities designed for talented and highly able elementary and middle school students. Bring your love of learning, your humor, and your unique talents to a community where intelligence and creativity are valued and supported! Students must be in grades 5-8 during the 2008-09 school year or at an equivalent home school level to apply.

Pursue existing interests and discover new ones in four courses that you will choose from a list of twenty-four options! Academic classes are offered each weekday in science, mathematics, literature, writing, law, cultural studies, dance, theatre, media arts, and visual arts. Please visit the website for listings and descriptions of 2008 courses. 2009 courses will be posted online in late April as they become finalized. As a part of ACADEMY, get a taste of campus life at Southern Oregon University. Live in residence halls, learn in university classrooms, and eat in on-campus dining halls! Living groups are divided by age and gender, with two students sharing each room. Each day balances structured time with social and recreational activities, which include attending a play at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Sessions run June 14-20 or June 21-27. Tuition assistance is available for those who qualify. For more information, visit: www.sou.edu/youth or write us at jensen@sou.edu

12. Differentiation—Challenges, Research, and Materials

Running an effectively differentiated classroom is challenging, but there are research studies and resource materials that can help make the job a little easier. [Click here](#) to read an article about how a Connecticut district is integrating leveled curricular materials to help engage students at their individual levels.

13. Gifted Education in Pennsylvania

[Click here](#) to read an article about gifted education in Pennsylvania. Districts across the nation face many of the same challenges as Oregon districts.

14. Gifted Education in Congress

You can access legislative updates about what is happening in gifted education at the federal level by accessing the [National Association for Gifted Children's legislative update webpage](#).

15. Charter Schools and Gifted Education

A charter school in Oregon is a public school operated by a group of parents, teachers and/or community members as a semi-autonomous school of choice within a school district. It is given the authority to operate under a contract or "charter" between

the members of the charter school community and the local board of education (sponsor). Under Oregon law, a charter school is a separate legal entity operating under a binding agreement with a sponsor. A public charter school is subject to certain laws pertaining to school district public schools, is released from others, and must operate consistent with the charter agreement.

Charter schools are not required to follow the state TAG mandate. However, many charter schools adopt curriculum and instructional strategies that may be particularly appropriate for TAG students. Local communities may want to consider whether or not a school of choice could help provide educational options for high-achieving students. [Click here](#) to visit the Oregon Department of Education's website about charter schools. A [Houston, Texas school district](#) has recently added a charter school program that may be advantageous for gifted students. There are already charter schools in Oregon like the [Lewis and Clark Montessori Charter School](#) and the [Center for Advanced Learning](#) that may be well-matched to some TAG students' needs.

16. Legislative Advocacy from Gifted Youth

[Click here](#) to read an article about a gifted 18-year-old who went to Washington, D.C. to advocate for gifted students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

17. Middle School Scrabble Tournament at Southern Oregon University

On April 30, SOU will host a middle school scrabble tournament. Middle School students enrolled in grades 6-8 may compete in this exciting one-day tournament. Each school may register up to five teams (two players per team). Using School Scrabble rules, the tournament will consist of six games. For more information, [visit the SOU Youth Outreach website](#).

18. Powerful Partnerships—Ashland School District and Southern Oregon University

The Ashland School District and SOU recently announced a powerful partnership that will help more high-achieving high school students to take advantage of university courses. [Click here](#) to access the full article.

19. OASL Battle of the Books

The Oregon Battle of the Books (OBOB) is a statewide program for reading motivation and comprehension sponsored by the Oregon Association of School Librarians in conjunction with a Library Services and Technology Act grant. Students are exposed to quality literature representing a variety of literary styles and viewpoints. The goals are to encourage reading for enjoyment, broaden reading interests, increase reading comprehension, and promote cooperative learning.

Lists of books are chosen and questions are written for elementary and middle schools. Students read the books, discuss them, and quiz each other on the contents. Then students compete in teams of four to correctly answer questions based on the books in a "quiz show" format. Half of the questions begin with the words "In which book..." so that the answer will be a title and author. The other questions are based on

content and require a specific answer from the book. Teams compete at local, district, regional, and state levels.

New lists of recommended titles for each level are compiled each year by the OBOB selection committee, which is made up of library staff and teachers. Titles are varied according to genre and difficulty so that readers may encounter a broad range of books. For more information, [click here](#) to access the official website.

20. Torrance Legacy Creative Writing Contest

NAGC, in conjunction with the Torrance Center, Scholastic Testing Service, and the Center for Gifted, is pleased to announce the Torrance Legacy Creative Writing Contest, for students in grades 4 through 12. Deadline for submissions is August 24. [Click here](#) for more information.

21. Joyce VanTassel-Baska Retirement Celebration

One of the foremost experts in gifted education, Dr. Joyce VanTassel-Baska, was celebrated at a party in her honor at the College of William and Mary. [Click here](#) to read the full article.

22. Accurate Identification of Underrepresented Groups

Districts all over the nation are seeking to improve their identification procedures, especially for identifying gifted students from underrepresented groups. [Click here](#) to read about how a Maryland school district is addressing this issue.

23. Are You a Teacher in Need of Funding for a Learning Project or a Community Member Looking to Support Specific Education Projects?

Donors Choose is a neat website that allows teachers to post projects for which they need additional funding. Then, people can make a tax-deductible contribution to that teacher. [Click here](#) to visit the webpage and learn more.

24. Fifth Annual Celebrating Student Success Banquet

The Celebrating Student Success banquet unites educators, business people, and community leaders in a forum aimed at rewarding schools within the K-12 school system that are meeting the challenge of closing the achievement gap in Oregon. These schools are focusing on how to increase success for all of their students, proving that there are strategies schools can implement that can, and do, meet the academic needs of all students. This awards ceremony has helped to increase our understanding of what it takes to close the achievement gap in our schools and is an inspirational and powerful experience for those who attend.

[Join us.](#) Learn what schools around the state are doing to close the academic achievement gap. Help celebrate the successes of 19 dedicated Oregon schools and learn what you can do in your school and community to help all students prepare for educational success.

What: Celebrating Student Success Awards Banquet

When: Friday May 1st, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Where: Oregon Convention Center, Portland

Cost: \$40 a seat

Registration is open through April 22nd.

Contact Crystal Greene at 503-947-5650 or crystal.greene@state.or.us for more information or to register. Or visit www.ode.state.or.us/go/CTAG to learn more.

25. Check Out Teacher Updates in Other Content Areas

There are fabulous Teacher Updates being published monthly in other content areas like foreign language, social studies, and mathematics. You can subscribe to them by visiting: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1843>

26. How to Submit Articles

If you would like to submit information for this newsletter, please email publication-ready short articles by the end of the month to stacey.figgins@state.or.us. Please include links and contact information but no attachments.

27. In Every Issue—Internet Resources

Oregon Department of Education TAG

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=76>

ERIC - Educational Resources Information Center

<http://www.eric.ed.gov/>

Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted (SENG)

<http://www.sengifted.org/>

Council for Exceptional Children

<http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home>

National Association for Gifted Children

www.nagc.org

Oregon Association for Talented and Gifted

www.oatag.org

REAL - Resources for Educational Achievement and Leadership

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/real/>

Get Ready Oregon web page: New Oregon Diploma information for the general public

<http://www.getreadyoregon.org>

Oregon Diploma web page: Resources and tools for educators

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=368>

Contact the Education Specialist in TAG

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