A Joint Conference Between
Vanderbilt Programs for Talented Youth &
Tennessee Association for the Gifted

October 24 and 25, 2019

Hosted at Vanderbilt University
Peabody College of Education and Human Development
Nashville, TN
Thursday, October 24

8:00 – 8:30: Registration and Coffee/Pastries (Wyatt Rotunda)

8:30 – 9:00: Welcome and Introduction

9:00 – 10:00: Keynote

**Addressing Excellence Gaps: Promoting High Achievement in the 21st Century**
*Jonathan Plucker, Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University* (Wyatt Rotunda)

Today’s economy and culture has a tremendous need for talent. Regardless of one’s field, there is always a shortage of talented people. A major cause of this shortage is the excellence gap — the achievement gap at the high end of student learning. In this session, we will briefly review recent research on the excellence gaps, followed by a detailed discussion of potential solutions.

10:15 – 11:30: Breakout Sessions

**Option 1: What's Your School's Talent Development Plan?**
*Jonathan Plucker, Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University* (Wyatt Rotunda)

In a series of recent studies, the lack of coordination among advanced learning policies and programs within schools and districts has become apparent. In this session, we will discuss how to construct talent development plans, share examples from districts, and begin creating plans for your schools and districts.

Intended Audience: All

**Option 2: Gifted 101: What Educators Need to Know About Meeting the Academic Needs of Gifted Students** - *Sarah DeLisle, Ed.D., Vanderbilt University* (Wyatt 050-1)

Who are the gifted students in your classroom? How do you best meet their academic needs? This session focuses on introductory ideas in gifted education from characteristics and definitions to common myths to effective strategies for differentiating instruction. If you are interested in learning more about gifted education or want to add more strategies to your instructional toolkit to better meet gifted student as part of your Tier 1 instruction, this session is for you. Join us for a conversation about gifted students — who they are, how they are similar to and different from the general population, and what common instructional and management strategies are effective for them.

Intended Audience: New to the field of gifted education

**Option 3: Out of the Box: Implementing Mystery as a Strategy to Engage Gifted Learners**
*Vicki Phelps, Ed.D., NBCT, Sumner County Schools* (Wyatt 050-3)

What does a box filled with a teddy bear, a matchbox car, a spool of thread, and broken chopsticks (to name a few) have to do with teaching The Progressive Era? Come find out! In understanding that academically gifted students report lacking motivation when faced with activities that are too easy, uninteresting, or are perceived as lacking relevance, this session will empower you with a research-based strategy that has been proven to engage and challenge gifted learners through advanced content, abstract thinking, higher-order thinking processes, and generalizations. Not only will you walk away with a unit ready to take back to your classroom, you will also learn how to develop your own mystery lessons to implement across multiple content areas to better meet the motivational and academic needs of your gifted learners.

Intended Audience: Teachers

**Option 4: Developing Literary Analysis Skills and Abstract Thinking in Intermediate and Middle School ELA Classrooms** - *Kevin Finn, The Webb School* (Wyatt 223)

How do you help your advanced students analyze text in meaningful ways? How do you ask complex questions or help students ask complex questions about a text? This session focuses on evidence-supported models to assist upper elementary and middle school teachers as they add depth and complexity to

The Sky’s the Limit: Reaching New Heights in Gifted Education #SkystheLimit2019
differentiate instruction and increase rigor in the ELA classroom. Participants will have the opportunity to practice applying the literary analysis wheel as they develop complex questions and help students see relationships among varying literary ideas.

Intended Audience: Upper Elementary and Middle School Teachers

11:40 – 12:40: Lunch (Vanderbilt Commons)

12:45 – 2:00: Breakout Sessions

**Option 1: Meeting the Affective Needs of Gifted Students through Scaffolding**  
*Tamra Stambaugh, Ph.D., Vanderbilt University (Wyatt 050-1)*

The importance of affective needs as part of a talent development framework are critical to one’s future trajectory. Affective skills that support academic risk taking, developing excellence, overcoming adversity, and regulating emotions can be taught and integrated within a language arts curriculum. In this session we will examine the new Jacob’s Ladder affective ladders and apply them to common affective components that promote talent development. Come prepared to learn new ladder frameworks and write your own affective ladders based on reading prompts or media used in your classroom.

Intended Audience: All

**Option 2: Reducing Implicit Bias in Gifted Education: Recognizing Microaggressions**  
*April Wells, Gifted Coordinator for Illinois School District U-46 (Wyatt 050-3)*

Students from marginalized backgrounds may face subtle, daily insults that seemingly question their participation in high ability learning environments. By recognizing the assault behind theses slightsl, racism work in gifted education is employed to provide a welcoming and safe environment for all gifted learners.

Intended Audience: All

**Option 3: Adding Depth and Complexity Through the Integration of Science and ELA**  
*Eric Fecht, Ed.D., Vanderbilt University (Wyatt 201)*

What do evidence-based models and strategies for adding depth and complexity look like in an elementary/middle school classroom? Are you looking for ways to help your students analyze literature and science content in a way that is grounded in NGSS and ELA content standards? This session will introduce you to evidence-based models, resources, and strategies that can be used to differentiate instruction by adding depth and complexity to your lessons. Be ready to practice applying models to your own classroom content.

Intended Audience: Elementary and Middle School Teachers

**Option 4: Identifying Gifted Students in Title 1 Schools**  
*Joanne O’Kain, Ed.D., Rutherford County Schools (Wyatt 121)*

The presenter will give practical tips on how to identify students in low-income areas. Research based strategies that are easy to understand and implement will be directed to classroom teachers, gifted facilitators, and administrators.

Intended Audience: Elementary Teachers and Administrators

**Option 5: Building Content Expertise: A Models Approach to Adding Complexity in Social Studies for Upper Elementary Through High School Gifted and Advanced Students**  
*Stephanie Clemson, Metro Nashville Public Schools (Wyatt 223)*

What is complexity and how do you incorporate complexity to support gifted student learning in social studies? After defining complexity, we will examine easy-to-apply models for incorporating complexity in social studies in ways that help students think like experts as they analyze primary sources, events, pictures and art, as well as nonfiction texts. After modeling a few approaches and discussing classroom tested ways complexity has been added to promote student learning, be prepared to differentiate your own lessons using the same models.

Intended Audience: Administrators and Social Studies Teachers
2:00 – 2:15: Break – Snacks available in breakout rooms

2:15 – 3:30: Breakout Sessions

**Option 1: Creativity Through the Magic of Constraints**  
*Jonathan Plucker, Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University (Wyatt Rotunda)*  
Constraints are often viewed as the enemy of creativity, but research suggests that constraints may be helpful to the creative process. Using a hands-on activity, we will explore the relationship between constraints and creativity and discuss specific ways to use these principles when working with students.  
Intended Audience: *All*

**Option 2: Blending Special Education with Programming**  
*Toni Brown, Williamson County Schools (Wyatt 223)*  
This session will focus on how to develop excellent programming for gifted students within a special education framework. Supporting gifted, underrepresented populations of students and high performing students in all tiers of learning, developing IEPs for students, providing professional development for educators, creating parent partnerships for advocacy, and providing leadership with sustainability will all be discussed.  
Intended Audience: *Teachers and Administrators*

**Option 3: The Three E’s of Math: Enrichment, Extension, and Expertise**  
*Jennifer Holt, Williamson County Schools (Wyatt 050-1)*  
One size does not fit all, and unlocking the potential of gifted and high-ability math students in mixed-ability classrooms can be a daunting task. This session will explore the basics of how to use compacting to move students into the three E’s of math. What does it mean to be a mathematician? Research-based strategies will be shared that can help teachers to enrich, extend and develop math expertise. Graham Fletcher’s Three Act Tasks, Number Talks, Debate, and Jo Boaler’s Mathematical Mindsets will be shared and discussed in this practical session.  
Intended Audience: *Elementary and Middle School Teachers*

**Option 4: Gifted and Multilingual Learners: How Can We Effectively Identify and Serve Them?**  
*Megan Parker Peters, Ph.D. and Jeanne Fain, Ph.D., Lipscomb University (Wyatt 201)*  
To support the changing landscape of P-12 students, those in the field of gifted education must also adjust to meet the identification and service needs of potentially-gifted students. Much has been written and echoed concerning the need to consider diverse populations and potential in gifted education. However, much less practical information has been shared regarding how to support, identify, and serve our ever-changing group of potentially-gifted students. This session will share how a LEA-university partnership developed between EL and Gifted colleagues to better serve students. We will present practical tools that can be used by educators, psychologists, and administrators to create models for talent development and identification, scaffold experience and opportunity, and match strength and growth opportunities.  
Intended Audience: *All*

**Option 5: Uncovering Blindspots: Lessons Learned in Designing and Implementing Equitable Programming** – *April Wells, Gifted Coordinator for Illinois School District U-46 (Wyatt 050-3)*  
Participants will gain insight on how one public school district developed programming that would provide structures aimed at recognizing the ability in untapped potential. The thoughtful consideration and collaboration supported the timely lift to redesign gifted programming to honor the talent in the students in the seats in their classrooms.  
Intended Audience: *All*

3:45 – 4:00: **TAG Business Meeting** (Wyatt Rotunda)
Friday, October 25

8:00 – 8:30:  Registration and Coffee/Pastries (Wyatt Rotunda)

8:30 – 9:00:  Welcome and Awards Presentation

9:00 – 10:00:  Keynote

Five Steps (+1) to Better Gifted Student Identification
Scott Peters, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin – Whitewater (Wyatt Rotunda)

The process by which students are selected for gifted services in schools is one of the most common and also
the most daunting and fraught with controversy. This session will offer five (plus one) recommendations for
how to implement gifted student identification policies that 1) locate the students they are supposed to find /
miss as few as possible and 2) mitigate the underrepresentation of students from traditionally underrepresented
populations. These recommendations include 1) universal consideration, 2) well-implemented, two-phase
identification systems, 3) building norms, 4) group specific norms, 5) lower overall criteria, and (+1)
identification system – program alignment.

10:15 – 11:30: Breakout Sessions

Option 1: Culturally Responsive Identification Practices
Joni Lakin, Ph.D., Auburn University (Wyatt 050-1)

Universal screening is a cornerstone for addressing underrepresentation in gifted and talented programs. We
will share evidence-based solutions for implementing universal screening to optimize program size and
diversity. We will also discuss choice of screeners and interpreting results for specific students, including
English learners.
Intended Audience: All

Option 2: Social-Emotional Skills Supporting Gifted Development: Bridging Potential with
Achievement - Megan Parker Peters, Ph.D. and Emily Mofield, Ed.D., Lipscomb University (Wyatt 223)

Social-emotional skills are often the missing ingredients needed to facilitate optimal achievement in gifted
students. Presenters will share lesson ideas for promoting social-emotional skills including guiding students to
take intellectual risks, use self-regulation strategies, develop self-awareness of how emotions can paralyze or
catalyze pursuits towards achievement, use problem-solving to cope with setbacks, and reflect and
appropriately respond to criticism. Participants will leave with engaging lesson ideas that explicitly teach
important social-emotional skills and connect to curriculum content. The pairing of social-emotional learning
and appropriate curriculum can elevate gifted students to reach unknown heights.
Intended Audience: All

Option 3: Twice Exceptional Students: Piecing the Puzzle Together for Success
Kristy Mall, Ed.D., Murfreesboro City Schools - Discovery School (Wyatt 201)

Finding success with twice exceptional students can be challenging and requires a multi-pronged approach. In
this session, we will explore the characteristics of twice exceptional students, strategies to overcome the
challenges teachers face when working with them, and the importance of helping them work through the
social emotional, as well as the academic issues they face, so they can achieve success.
Intended Audience: All

Option 4: Making Gifted Thinking Visible: Teaching Strategies to Connect Art to Curriculum
Jennifer Holt and Stephanie Higgs, Williamson County Schools (Wyatt 050-3)
The role of a teacher of gifted students is not to deliver a body of content knowledge, but rather to create a
community of learners where students develop critical thinking and communication skills whereby the student
can share their own learning and be changed by the learning of others. Creating a culture of thinking means
demonstrating for students how collective and individual thinking can be valued and promoted. Using Socratic Seminar techniques, Making Thinking Visible strategies, and analysis wheels, teachers will learn to teach their students how to analyze art from Tennessee's museums. Materials and lesson plans will be shared as these strategies are modeled for use in classrooms.

Intended Audience: Teachers and Administrators

Option 5: High School- Services, Applications, and Mentoring Oh My!
Jenna Harland, Suzanne Lange, and Anne Rucker, Williamson County Schools (Wyatt 102)
High School gifted services are a different breed. See how one district is serving students until graduation. This session will explore curriculum and services for all four years, college application sample lesson, and successful mentoring program for serving this unique set of learners.

Intended Audience: High School Teachers, Administrators, and Parents

Option 6: The Power of Concept Driven Units
Kevin Finn, The Webb School (Wyatt 121)
Gifted students benefit from engagement with advanced content organized conceptually. During this session, you will have an opportunity to explore examples sourced from ELA units developed according to this principle. From the development of generalizations to the use of concept-based assessments, this session will support your own curriculum planning and instruction.

Intended Audience: Elementary and Middle School Teachers and Administrators

11:40 – 12:40: Lunch (Vanderbilt Commons)

12:45 – 2:00: Breakout Sessions

Students are best served by G/T programs when there is alignment between identification practices and the services offered to identified students. This alignment is especially important when attempting to increase diversity in identified students. This session offers strategies for creating alignment between identification, services, and learning outcomes to achieve your program’s learning goals for your students.

Intended Audience: Teachers and Administrators

Option 2: Use of Phenomenon-Based Learning to Target High Level Learners in the Middle and High School Classroom - Jennifer A. Ufnar, Ph.D. & Letimicia Fears, Ph.D., Vanderbilt University (Wyatt 050-3)
In this session, teachers will learn how to design Phenomenon-based Learning (PhenoBL) lessons to reach 7-12 learners in both heterogeneous and gifted classrooms. Through the phenomenon-based learning approach, classroom learning is modeling actual scientific practice. Scientists both follow others’ protocols (materials and methods) to observe and describe the phenomena that they study, as well as perform further experimentation to answer new questions that arise. Using this method in the classroom allows students to learn the most important aspects of scientific research, including observation, questioning, analysis, and communication. The learning of new content becomes applied to the phenomenon, which removes the need for memorization, and becomes much more process-driven, authentic, and student-led.

Intended Audience: Middle and High School Teachers (Grades 7-12)

"We have no gifted and talented students at our school," is a statement many professionals have heard or even said, but many now dare to add the powerful word "YET!" What are the myths concerning characteristics, identification, and appropriate instructional practices of students that may be under-achieving, high-ability "diamonds in the rough"? Does your school have a mindset of talent development as part of a program for gifted and talented individuals? What factors are often overlooked or misunderstood in assessing student
potential? What issues prevent instructional high expectations and how can they be overcome? What are some examples of resources and programs that prepare students for more rigorous learning experiences and successful participation in gifted and talented programs? With a comprehensive continuum of services, schools can realize their own greater successes when they work to cultivate and nurture the unique learning needs of students with the greatest undeveloped learning potential.

Intended Audience: Elementary and Middle School Teachers, Parents

Option 4: Questioning Across the Content Areas Using the Jacob’s Ladder Model
Sarah DeLisle, Ed.D., Vanderbilt University (Wyatt 223)
Jacob’s Ladder is a language arts curriculum supplement that was piloted and proven successful with low-income, high-ability students. In this session participants will learn how to use the scaffolded questioning approach of Jacob’s Ladder in both gifted and heterogeneous classrooms to create tasks and higher-order thinking questions that engage students in critical analysis. Originally designed to be a scaffolded approach to questioning with literature and nonfiction texts, the Jacob’s Ladder model can be used in other content areas as well. This session provides you with the knowledge to design and effectively implement your own questions and tasks using resources you already have in your classroom. This process can be utilized at all grade levels—all it takes is the “know how” to design your own ladders to push all students’ thinking to new levels and to bring rigor into your everyday instructional practices.

Intended Audience: All

Option 5: Curriculum Compacting and Easy to Use Math Activities in the General Elementary Classroom - Eric Fecht, Ed.D., Vanderbilt University (Wyatt 121)
Curriculum compacting is a form of acceleration that has positive and large effects for increasing student achievement and reducing the amount of time students spend on known tasks. Curriculum compacting is most effective when students are working on more in-depth activities after being compacted. This takes resources and management. In this session we will discuss how best to compact math instruction, especially skill-based activities, and then practice using Marcy Cook Math materials as one way to engage students in problem solving and in-depth activities.

Intended Audience: Elementary Teachers

Option 6: Local Norms: What They Are, How They Work, and Why You Should Use Them
Scott Peters, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin – Whitewater (Wyatt Rotunda)
Most often, students are identified for gifted services based on how well they perform on a given assessment compared to similar-age, or same-grade, peers. This peer group is most often operationalized as the rest of the same-grade students across the nation (national norms). This is an ineffective practice for two reasons: 1) it fails to identify the students most in need of additional challenge within a given school and 2) it results in pervasive and substantial racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, home language, and ability disproportionality. This session will outline an alternative that addresses both of these problems. The use of local, building norms for student identification both better-identifies the students most in-need of additional challenge within each school, and has been shown to increase the representation rate of students from Latinx and African American families by 170% and 300% respectively.

Intended Audience: Teachers and Administrators

2:00 – 2:10: Break – Snacks available in breakout rooms

2:10 – 3:20: Breakout Sessions

Option 1: Gifted Education Within a Response to Intervention Framework
Scott Peters, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin - Whitewater (Wyatt Rotunda)
Gifted education has been criticized from a range of perspectives relating to purpose, equity, and effectiveness. This session will outline contemporary gifted education in contrast to more traditional views with regard to purpose, methods of student selection, integration with other school initiatives, and
programming. The Advanced Academic perspective sees high ability education as one part of the Response to Intervention (RtI) or Multi-tiered Systems and Supports (MTSS) frameworks where the goal is the same for all students: trying to make sure as many students are challenged as often as possible while engaged in public education. Implications will be shared for gifted student identification, program size, program content, general education classroom practices, and more.

Intended Audience: Teachers and Administrators

Option 2: Use of Phenomenon-Based Learning to Target High Level Learners in the Elementary Classroom - Jennifer A. Ufnar, Ph.D. and Letimicia Fears, Ph.D., Vanderbilt University (Wyatt 050-3)

In this session, teachers will learn how to design Phenomenon-based Learning (PhenoBL) lessons to reach K-6 learners in both heterogeneous and gifted classrooms. Through the phenomenon-based learning approach, classroom learning is modeling actual scientific practice. Scientists both follow others’ protocols (materials and methods) to observe and describe the phenomena that they study, as well as perform further experimentation to answer new questions that arise. Using this method in the classroom allows students to learn the most important aspects of scientific research, including observation, questioning, analysis, and communication. The learning of new content becomes applied to the phenomenon, which removes the need for memorization, and becomes much more process-driven, authentic, and student-led.

Intended Audience: Elementary and Early Middle School Teachers (Grades K-6)

Option 3: Techniques for Adding Engaging Technology to Quality Gifted Instructional Units

Lauren Wheelock, St. Bernard Academy (Wyatt 050-1)

Do you have students who love technology? Are your student's curious about how their devices work or their apps are created? Do you want to learn techniques for how to add rigor to activities that they already enjoy? How can literature and debatable questions be integrated to stimulate issue-based learning? Help your students learn to ask, "How can I harness robots for solutions to solve real world problems?" In this course, you will see how instructors use engaging technology such as code.org, Lego Boost Robots, and Spheros, in conjunction with instructional strategies and techniques for rigorous student challenges. Quality gifted instructional models that include advanced standards, complex process and product dimensions, and abstraction with themes and concepts will be discussed. Students are willing to grapple and problem solve through difficult concepts if they are engaged in the content and feel as if they can create real world solutions.

Intended Audience: Elementary and Middle School Teachers

Option 4: Collaborative Teaching Models: Gifted Education in Regular Ed Classrooms

Emily Mofield, Ed.D., Lipscomb University and Vicki Phelps, Ed.D., Sumner County Schools (Wyatt 223)

As the saying goes, if it takes two to tango, why not teach them both how to dance? Collaboration between gifted and regular education teachers can help alleviate challenges in managing differentiation, but how do models like co-planning, co-teaching, and coaching actually work? In addition to sharing "how-to's" through conversation starters, successful strategies, and next steps, presenters will also share lessons learned from implementing various collaborative teaching models, including findings from research conducted within a large, K-12 school district.

Intended Audience: Teachers and Administrators

Option 5: Using Fictional and Argumentative Analysis Models to Develop Writing Skills Among Elementary Students - Tamra Stambaugh, Ph.D., Vanderbilt University (Wyatt 201)

How do authors take different elements of writing, such as perspective, setting, or characters, and turn them into a story, message, or argument? In this session, we explore how teachers can use field tested models to help young budding writers find their voice and develop fiction and argumentative piece using the tools and models of experts.

Intended Audience: Elementary Teachers and Administrators

3:20 – 3:30: Conference Wrap-Up and Reflection (In breakout rooms)
Notes