

On the HORIZON

Features:

Resiliency

Open Referral
Information

Social
Networking

Destination
ImagiNation

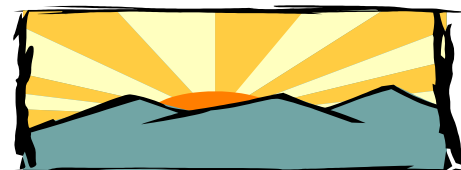
Coordinator's
Column

- Resiliency

-

- Open Referral

*Cypress-Fairbanks Gifted and Talented Department
10300 Jones Road
Houston, TX 77065*



Resiliency

“If I ran a school, I'd give the average grade to the ones who gave me all the right answers, for being good parrots. I'd give the top grades to those who made a lot of mistakes and told me about them, and then told me what they learned from them.”

– R. Buckminster Fuller

Can't we all relate to this quote? As we look back on our younger days, we are likely to recall “mistakes” we've made, ones that we would probably do over if given the chance. These “learning opportunities” have made us all stronger and wiser than we would have been without them. We can admit it is difficult to envision the long-term benefits while in the throes of the short-term disappointments, heartbreaks, and crushing defeats. Even as adults struggle with these shortcomings, our children face similar challenges, regardless of giftedness. They may not be missing out on the next career opportunity, but perhaps denied admission into their first choice college. They may want to be selected for a position on a team, only to find that they will be warming the bench.

As we begin another school year, we all will face new and different challenges. How ourselves and our children respond and grow from those experiences will form the essential building blocks to long term happiness, success, and self-esteem. It's important for us to remember that gifted does not mean perfect. It's okay to make mistakes, as we learn so much more from those missteps! Even Amish quilt makers take care to err in their stitching, as a reminder that no one is perfect.

Each start of the school year is much like New Year's Eve, with all the excitement of new possibilities and new beginnings. So while we prepare our children for another year of learning, let's remind them that most mistakes are lessons in disguise that bring new knowledge.

We wish you and your children a happy and successful school year!



Open Referral Information

Each year, parents of students in grades K-11 can refer their child for testing for the HORIZONS Program. Beginning October 1st until the last day of school in November, parents must obtain, complete, and return a Parent Survey/Permission to Test form from their elementary campus counselor (grades K-5) or the office of the director of instruction (grades 6-11).

For the school year 2009-2010, the LAST DAY to return the Parent Survey/Permission to Test form is **November 30th, 2009**. We must adhere to this deadline so that we have ample time to order test materials, schedule testing, and prepare all documents associated with the testing process.

Children will be tested in January and/or February, depending on campus events. Your child's campus will be relaying specific information regarding dates and times of testing as it becomes available.

Please contact your campus personnel to discuss your concerns relating to the testing process and whether you should pursue testing for your child. You may also view helpful information on the HORIZONS website!



Facebook? MySpace?

The abundance of social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace can have both positive and negative affects on our children. We have heard the stories of cyber-bullying on the news in recent months, some cases severe enough to cause unbelievable damage to families. While this is a disastrous result, there are some great benefits to these sites, both for children and their parents.

Not only are these websites a fun way to connect with classmates, children and adults can join any number of "groups" online with their accompanying message boards and interactive areas. The SENG Organization (Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted) has entered the social networking arena with a group on Facebook. Recently found on Facebook is a group supporting gifted girls. The possibilities are endless, as it seems no matter what your interest is, there's a group for you. This could benefit our gifted students who may be looking for support groups online filled with children who feel the exact way they do. For these purposes, the social networking websites can be a helpful source, with adult supervision and approval of course.

Additionally, there are other sites for adults such as <http://giftededucation.ning.com>. Billing itself as "real life collaboration regarding all issues in gifted education", the site contains a number of references, articles, resources and discussion boards to assist in the raising of gifted children.

As you and your children surf, we ask that if you find a particularly useful site, please share with us! We're always on the lookout for new places to visit on the World Wide Web! Happy and Safe Surfing!

Tell us what you think!

In order to find ways to improve our program, we have enlisted the help of website www.surveymonkey.com! It's an easy to use format which allows you to take a survey online and give us your thoughts on several different issues. Your input is valuable as we determine areas we need to offer additional services, improve existing services, and add quality to our HORIZONS Program in many and varied ways.



To participate, please click on the following link:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=nTSZfgW_2f09aMM9JOn_uNrhg_3d_3d. This link is also posted on the HORIZONS website.

Watch for analysis and results in future editions of the newsletter!

Destination ImagiNation News!

At the end of the 2008-2009 school year, CFISD had 5 teams selected to compete in the Destination ImagiNation global tournament in Knoxville, TN. As a result of their dedication and hard work, Hamilton Elementary's "Billion Bolts of Brilliance" came in 19th place overall, and Hamilton Middle School's "Squirrels" placed 16th. Two teams came home with first place awards, the Bang Elementary's "DI Dynamites" and Sampson Elementary's "Sampson Superstars".



Once again, CFISD looks forward to a successful year with Destination ImagiNation. As we had record numbers of students participate in 2008-2009, we know our numbers are likely to increase once more. With such a great program, designed to foster creativity, thinking skills, and cooperation, we cannot think of any child that would not benefit from this program!

Congratulations to all our 2008-2009 teams for a great year!

Here we go again!

Destination ImagiNation is gearing up for another year of learning, exploring, and problem solving! But you may be asking yourself, what exactly is it?

Destination ImagiNation is a community-based, school-friendly program that builds participants' creativity, problem solving, and teamwork in enjoyable and meaningful ways. Students make lasting friendships and learn to work with the skills of others to come up with the best solution they can find to problems. Destination ImagiNation has the following goals for all participants:

- To foster creative and critical thinking
- To learn and apply Creative Problem Solving method and tools
- To develop teamwork, collaboration, and leadership skills
- To nurture research and inquiry skills, involving both creative exploration and attention to detail
- To enhance and apply written and verbal communication and presentation skills
- To promote the recognition, use, and development of many and varied strengths and talents
- To encourage competence in, enthusiasm for, and commitment to real-life problem solving

You may be thinking this sounds perfect for your child. Well, it is! This program is geared for ALL students in CFISD and we welcome all teams! But first, a few guidelines on forming a team and getting the DI spirit rolling are necessary.

All Destination ImagiNation teams must have the support of their campus principal. If you and your child are interested in forming a team, please consult with your principal. Each team also needs a School Sponsor who takes care of the business end of things with the district. Finally, the volunteer opportunities for parents abound! Whether you choose to serve as an appraiser, or even a Team Manager, we have easy ways for parents to get involved and have fun!

Teams work together over a period of weeks on a particular challenge. When tournament time rolls around, they are able to present amazing, interesting, and enjoyable solutions.

Does this sound like something your child would enjoy? Does this sound like fun? You bet! Check out www.idodi.org for information on past challenges and the history of this exciting program!

If you want to get involved with Destination ImagiNation, please email Sandra.Stocks@cfisd.net. We will work together to find the answers to your questions and get you and your student on the road to DI!

We will soon be posting more information to our website at <http://www.cfisd.net/dept2/curricu/gifted/gifted.htm>. Stay tuned!

FREE Webinars from NAGC!

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) is pleased to present an exciting new opportunity to the gifted education community. Designed for classroom teachers, counselors, graduate students, parents, GT coordinators, and administrators, NAGC's Webinars on Wednesdays will bring top-notch educational content direct to you. In the convenience of your home or office, you will be virtually connected to experts in the field who will share practical advice, as well as updates on the latest issues in gifted education.

Best of all, the WOW series is FREE through 2009!

Tune in the 2nd and 4th Wednesday (plus a monthly "Parent Night". WOW is FREE for a limited time! In order to have active participation between the WOW presenter(s) and the audience, a limited number of "seats" are available. Registration opens two weeks before the event, and closes when capacity is reached.

Upcoming Webinars:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 9 th | Differentiation Overview with Jennifer Beasley, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas.
Registration Opens: August 27 12pm EST. |
| September 16 th | PARENT NIGHT! Back to School. Back to Gifted. Presenter: Robin Schader, NAGC Parent Resource Advisor.
Registration Opens: September 3 7pm EST. |
| September 23 rd | Things Administrators Should Know About Gifted Education with Joyce VanTassel-Baska, College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia
Registration Opens: September 10 7pm EST. |
| October 14 th | Pre Assessment: What are the Tools?
Registration Opens: September 24 12pm EST. |
| October 28 th | Examining the Myths and Truths of Gifted Education
Registration Opens: October 15 7pm EST. |

More information can be found on the WOW page!
Visit <http://www.nagc.org/wow.aspx> for registration details!
Please feel free to share this with your colleagues and parents!

Coordinator's Column

by Carla Butler



Welcome Back! I am looking forward to a fantastic year! I would like to thank all of the parents, students and district employees who provided valuable feedback on the end of the year evaluation survey. We continue to look for ways to make improvements to the program and welcome your comments. If you have not had a chance to participate in the survey, please visit the HORIZONS website and log onto to the survey instrument. I will continue to check the responses throughout the first semester.

I would also like to encourage parents to join the GT Listserv. To join, go to <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/list> and click on "Select a List", then select, "Gifted and Talented Education". To finish, click on "join the List". You would need to enter your email address, so that you will be able to receive, via email, information about opportunities for gifted students from across the state.

HORIZONS Department Staff

Carla Butler, Coordinator

*Debra Woolley, GT Helping
Teacher*

*Sandra Stocks, Secretary
& Editor, On the HORIZON*

*Sandra Beehner, Special
Programs Assistant.
GT Focus, BIL-ESL
Records/Assessments*

Maria Meehan, Translator

*Allison Tucker,
Office Assistant*

SAVE THE DATES!

*October 1–November 30th
Open Referral Period for GT
Screening*

*December 2nd–4th
TAGT Conference, Houston*

*February 20th, 2010
Destination ImagiNation Regional
Tournament*

*March 23rd, 2010
HORIZONS Student Showcase*

*April 16th–17th, 2010
Destination ImagiNation State
Tournament*



**Links to Linger Over for
Students:**

www.iwaswondering.com

www.amnh.org/ology

www.brainpop.com

**Links to Linger Over for
Parents:**

www.dukegiftedletter.com

www.gcq.sagepub.com

[http://journals.prufrock.com/
IJP/b/gifted-child-today](http://journals.prufrock.com/IJP/b/gifted-child-today)

We're on the web!

<http://www.cfisd.net/dept2/curricu/gifted/gifted.htm>