DEADLINES & UPDATES

GIFTED MONITORING

All monitoring documents are on the thumb drives that you will receive at the 2015 Gifted Regional Trainings. These documents were previously emailed to coordinators and emailed a second time to those who attended the Compliance Monitoring-Gifted Education Programs webinar. The link to view the recorded webinar, which is 1 hour, 40 minutes in length, is https://alsde.webex.com/alsde/ldr.php?RCID=a233f6f976e8f4f4ce6f4786cc6e0dd5.

REPORT DEADLINES:
April 15, 2016: Second Grade Child Find LEA Summary Report

All students in the top two quadrants of each teacher form will be referred for gifted/Enrichment Model services. The gifted specialist sends the school report from Second Grade Child Find to the coordinator who compiles the data into the LEA Summary report. This report shows the total number of referrals by race/ethnicity from each school. This report may be submitted any time after the first semester, but no later than April 15, 2016.

REMINDEERS:
DO NOT SEND STUDENT NAMES VIA E-MAIL!

E-mail has been used on a regular basis to discuss referrals and eligibilities of students. However, new rules will change how we share and discuss issues that include Personal Identifiable Information (PII). Reminder: You can no longer e-mail names of students, referral or eligibility data, test scores, etc., for us to review. If you need to submit any information that contains PII to us, please call or e-mail to let us know. Then you can either send a fax or we can send you a link to upload the information to the ALSDE secure file transfer system.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) & RUMORS

We have had several questions regarding the use of the ACT ASPIRE scores. This is an achievement test and must only be used as one of three items under the Performance Indicators section of the Gifted Eligibility Determination Form, or Matrix. Since the ASPIRE test reports scores in national percentiles, you can use the achievement section of the points earn chart on the right side of the matrix. Remember that you must use total scores of Reading, Math, Science, or Writing. You may use ONE achievement score only, even if you have high scores on all achievement data gathered from STAR Enterprise, Performance Series, and ASPIRE. However, achievement is not required on the matrix.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Association of Alabama Annual Conference


Save the Date!! February 25-27, 2016

Environmental Education Association of Alabama

Annual Conference

McDowell Camp and Conference Center

Discovery: A Bridge to Learning

This year's theme highlights discoveries about the natural world throughout the state of Alabama. Our keynote speaker is Heather Montgomery, author of nonfiction children's books and environmental education advocate. Also Fred Hunter, of television's Absolutely Alabama will be with us!
Check out the AAGC Web site with the latest contests and extracurricular opportunities. The Web site is updated frequently, so check it out! http://www.alabamagifted.org/@alabamagiftedgtala

Have You Read…?
Edutopia’s Project-Based Learning and Gamification: Two Great Tastes That go Great Together
http://www.edutopia.org/blog/project-based-learning-gamification-go-great-together-heather-wolpert-gawron

Heather Wolpert-Gawron shares her experience of gamifying a project-based learning experience for her students. She wanted to individualize the learning for her students in order to meet their specific needs. She was able to accomplish this through gamification. She used a company that specializes in this area. Read about her experience and success that motivated and engaged students in their learning.

Talents Unlimited initial training was a huge success at the Alabama Association for Gifted Children Conference. Many conference attendees couldn’t attend since the class was at capacity. They have requested trainings around the state. We would like to offer the training in the locations that expressed an interest. Please take a moment to complete this survey so we can plan a training near you. Click HERE for the survey or click the link above.

GRANT & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
DonorsChoose.org
http://www.donorschoose.org/
Deadline: Accepted at anytime

DonorsChoose.org is an online charity that makes it easy for anyone to help students in need. Public school teachers from every corner of America post classroom project requests on our site, and people can give any amount to the project that most inspires you. When a project reaches its funding goal, we ship the materials to the school. You'll get photos of the project taking place, a letter from the teacher, and insight into how every dollar was spent. Give over $50 and you'll also receive hand-written thank-you notes from the students.

ALABAMA INVASIVE PLANT COUNCIL (ALIPC) EDUCATION & OUTREACH GRANT PROGRAM 2015
Deadline: November 30, 2015

The Alabama Invasive Plant Council is soliciting grant proposals for non-native invasive plant projects in the State of Alabama. The intent of this grant is to provide funding to organizations or individuals who wish to educate the public about non-native invasive plants and their effects on the environment and/or to conduct small-scale activities for controlling noxious weeds. Proposals will be accepted from individuals, public or private nonprofit organizations and academic institutions. The application with additional information is attached at the end of this e-newsletter. For more information, email Dana Stone at Dana.Stone@forestry.alabama.gov

TED TALKS PLAYLIST
Talks by Brilliant Kids and Teens
https://www.ted.com/playlists/129/ted_under_20

This month’s playlist has 14 talks by kids and teens. These topics range from building a nuclear reactor at age 14, developing a pancreatic cancer test, a solar-powered device to scare lions and what adults can learn from kids. Talks may range from 3.5 minutes to 25 minutes. Take some time to check out these talks by gifted children. Some may be appropriate to include in your concept-based units with the same concepts.

INSPIRATION by VENSPIRED
http://venspired.com/posters/

How have you been using social media? Do you make connections to develop your professional learning network (PLN)? Great resources are shared by educators on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and so on. Many resources used in this eNewsletter have been obtained from social networks. We can learn so much from each other in order to make a difference for our students. What resources have you found and what resources have you shared?
CONTESTS & OTHER REAL-WORLD AUDIENCES

ALSDE GIFTED WEB PAGE

Deadline: Ongoing

HELP! HELP! HELP! I desperately need photos! Many of you post photos on Facebook. Please consider emailing a photo or two to us for the state Web site. When you send your photo of students actively engaged in learning or of completed projects please include the following information:

1. Describe the activity/project.
2. Explain how or why the project/activity is appropriate for gifted and not just good for all students.
3. Provide a link to your school or classroom Web page or Facebook page, if you have one.
4. Include an assurance statement that you have parental permission for the children to be on the Internet.

GREEN RIBBON SCHOOLS AWARD - STATE & NATIONAL LEVELS
http://alex.state.al.us/grs.html
Deadline: December 22, 2015

Are you developing and utilizing outdoor classrooms?
Are you concerned about indoor air quality, improving nutrition, and the overall health of students and staff?
Are you recycling or conserving energy?
Submit an application for the 2016 Green Ribbon Schools. Click the link to download a school or district application. If you have any questions, please contact Shirley Farrell.

2016 ENGINEER GIRL ESSAY CONTEST
Deadline: February 1, 2016 at 6:00 pm EST

Engineers often make challenging decisions that can affect thousands of people. To help them to make good decisions, many engineering organizations have created guidelines for professional behavior or "codes of ethics." Most engineering codes of ethics state that engineers must consider the safety, health, and general well-being of the people that are or may be affected by their work. Many of these codes also state that engineers must also consider how their work can sustainably protect the environment. This means that public safety, health, and well-being, and environmental sustainability are primary concerns for engineers.

To Enter the Contest:
Imagine yourself as an engineer working on a promising new technology. You may want to consider some of the technologies currently being developed to address one of Engineering’s Grand Challenges. Write an essay briefly describing the technology and what improvements you think it can provide in at least one of the four main areas of engineering responsibility:

- Safety
- Health
- Well-being
- Environmental sustainability

Discuss any challenges to safety, health, well-being, and sustainability that this technology might present, and describe what you, as an engineer, would do or consider to be sure that your responsibilities are fully addressed. The contest is open to individual girls and boys in the following three competition categories:

1. Elementary School Students (grades 3-5); Essays must be 400 to 700 words.
2. Middle School Students in (grades 6-8); Essays must be 600 to 1100 words.
3. High School Students (grades 9-12); Essays must be 1000 to 1500 words.

For more information about the rules and requirements or to submit your essay, click the link above. Thank you to Sue Ausman of Jefferson County Schools for sharing this contest!
BOOK-TEACHER OR STUDENT

Hello Ruby: Adventures in Coding by Linda Liukas

A new book that weaves coding into the story. Amazon’s book description: Meet Ruby—a small girl with a huge imagination. In Ruby’s world anything is possible if you put your mind to it. When her dad asks her to find five hidden gems Ruby is determined to solve the puzzle with the help of her new friends, including the Wise Snow Leopard, the Friendly Foxes, and the Messy Robots. As Ruby stomps around her world kids will be introduced to the basic concepts behind coding and programming through storytelling. Learn how to break big problems into small problems, repeat tasks, look for patterns, create step-by-step plans, and think outside the box. With hands-on activities included in every chapter, future coders will be thrilled to put their own imaginations to work. Thank you to Margie Tyner of Enterprise City Schools for sharing this resource!

RESOURCES

Arctic Tern Journey
http://eol.org/info/disc_google_earth#tern
The Arctic Tern (Sterna paradisaea) makes an incredible migration each year. These small birds travel distances of more than 50,000 miles, from pole to pole, crossing through temperate and tropical regions along the way. Carsten Egevang used geo-locator tags to track some of these terns, and he shares their story with us in this Google Earth tour video.

How a Virus Invades the Body
It is that time of the year again, when the flu starts to wreak havoc. And so, NPR’s Robert Krulwich and medical animator David Bolinsky, created an animated look at what actually happens when a virus invades your body and tricks a single cell into making a million more viruses, and how your immune system eventually deals with the whole mess. It’s a nice demystification of phenomena that affects our everyday lives.

Holt Interactive Graphic Organizers
Multiple graphic organizers are available on this Web site. The categories are:
- Generating, Identifying and Organizing Details
- Determining Main Idea and Drawing Conclusions
- Order and Sequence
- Comparison-Contract and Cause and Effect
- Process and Cycle Diagrams
- Evaluating and Making Decisions
- Persuasive and Supporting a Position
- Vocabulary
- Miscellaneous Organizers

New Livebinder: Citizen Science
http://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=1777028
This Livebinder contains resources, websites, lessons, and apps that will provide real-world science for students….and adults. The students gather and/or analyze data for global scientists.
HEY! HEY! ALABAMA
IT WAS A PLEASURE!
Pat’s sessions were well-attended; our booth was a success... but
so many of you were waiting until October 1 when your district money would be released.

Engine-Uity is offering 15% off of EVERYTHING
www.engine-uity.com

WAIT! THERE’S MORE!
FREE SHIPPING ON ORDERS OVER $50.00
Want to use a P.O.? List your items with the sale prices + shipping or no shipping if your order qualifies.

SALE ENDS
OCTOBER 31, 2015
AT MIDNIGHT

NOT AT THE CONFERENCE? NO WORRIES ..JOIN IN THE FUN!
As usual with our sales:
1. Your credit card will be charged the full amount.
2. Your credit card will be refunded (reflecting the sale prices) on the next business day.

Patricia A. Leadbeater
President
Engine-Uity
Alabama School of Fine Arts (ASFA)  
http://www.asfa.k12.al.us
Did you know ASFA is a public high school for students in Grades 7-12? They have an Open House on Saturday, November 7, 2015. For more information, call Jaronda Little at 205-252-9241.

FIELD EXPERIENCES
The purpose of the field study experience is to enhance and enrich the content and skills from units of study. The trip becomes an embedded activity within the concept-based curriculum unit. This month’s featured trip is Ocean Explorer: Deep-Sea Corals at http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/edu/themes/deep-sea-corals/welcome.html. Not all corals are found on island coasts in shallow seas. In fact over half of all known coral species are found in deep, dark waters where temperatures range from 39-54 degrees Fahrenheit. Read mission logs (primary source documents), view videos of deep-sea corals and scientific research, explore careers, and understand why they are important within the ocean ecosystems and to humans. This site includes lesson plans, which would serve as activities for scaffolded questions within your concept-based curriculum units.

As with any field trip experience, what before, during, and after experiences have you planned for students to further the studies of the concept-based curriculum? What Essential Understandings will students discover through Essential Questions and/or Scaffold Questions as they experience the field study?

CONCEPT-BASED CURRICULUM
Culminating Performance Task (CPT)
We are changing this section of the e-newsletter to focus on the culminating performance task at the end of each concept-based curriculum unit. This section will include one or more EUs and the CPT. This final performance task/project contains three parts: WHAT, WHY, and HOW. Frequently, we see the HOW listed but the WHAT and WHY are just as important.

The WHAT + WHY ties the culminating performance task back to the unit. This is more like a student objective.
The **HOW** provides the fuzzy, real-world problem or scenario for the students to analyze, research, create a solution, communicate that solution, and possibly implement the solution.

The template to develop your CPT is:

```
WHAT => Analyze Evaluate Investigate Create theme/topic/subject

WHY => in order to understand how (or why) ________________  

HOW => Students will demonstrate their understanding by  

(activity that provides students the opportunity to demonstrate why and what of EU)
```

This month’s CPT is from a unit developed by Hilary McKinney of Chilton County Schools.

WHAT=> *Create* a robot or robotic part that is a system or subsystem that can sense, think, and act.  

**Topic of study**

WHY=> in order to understand how changing one part of a system may affect the whole system (EU12); each part of a system has a particular form and function (EU3); and/or subsystems exist within systems_(EU4).  

This CPT will provide students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of one, two or three EUs, depending on the final project created.

HOW => Students will choose one scenario:  
1. You are a mechanical engineer who designs robots. You have been asked to create a robot that will do a job for a person. Write a page about your robot including the following information:  
   - Robot’s name and purpose  
   - Detailed information about how the robot will sense, think and act  
   - How you will program the robot  
   - Drawing or model of the robot.

2. You are a biomedical engineer who has designed a robotic body part for a person with a disability. Write a one-page description about this bionic body part that includes:  
   - Describe your design  
   - Detailed information about how the robotic part will sense, think and act  
   - How the person will use the body part

3. You are a computer programmer who has been asked to invent a new robot for gaming. Include in your description the following:
• How will your robot work with the players and video game software to perform a task?
• How will you program the robot?
• What instructions must you provide to the robot?
• What instructions must the players provide in order for the robot to interact with them?

Designs will be presented to the appropriate companies for approval for full development of the robot or robotic part.

Eliminating the What, Why and How sections, the CPT is:

Create a robot or robotic part that is a system or subsystem that can sense, think, and act in order to understand how changing one part of a system may affect the whole system (EU12); each part of a system has a particular form and function (EU3); and/or subsystems exist within systems. (EU4).

Students will choose one scenario:
1. You are a mechanical engineer who designs robots. You have been asked to create a robot that will do a job for a person. Write a page about your robot including the following information:
   • Robot’s name and purpose
   • Detailed information about how the robot will sense, think and act
   • How you will program the robot
   • Drawing or model of the robot.

2. You are a biomedical engineer who has designed a robotic body part for a person with a disability. Write a one-page description about this bionic body part that includes:
   • Describe your design
   • Detailed information about how the robotic part will sense, think and act
   • How the person will use the body part

3. You are a computer programmer who has been asked to invent a new robot for gaming. Include in your description the following:
   • How will your robot work with the players and video game software to perform a task?
   • How will you program the robot?
   • What instructions must you provide to the robot?
   • What instructions must the players provide in order for the robot to interact with them?

Designs will be presented to the appropriate companies for approval for full development of the robot or robotic part.