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=a233f6f976e8f4f6cf4786cc6e0dd5.

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.

REMINDErs:

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.

STI-PD & AAGC CONFERENCE:

Attendance at the conference has been verified in Chalkable STI-PD. Please make sure your attendance is accurate. There were several online “check-ins” that were blank. E-mail Shirley at sfarrell@alsde.edu if you have any questions or corrections.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) & RUMORS

According to the Alabama Administrative Code, the definition of gifted in Alabama is 290-8-9-.12(1) Definition. Intellectually gifted children and youth are those who perform or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. These children and youth require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Children and youth possessing these abilities can be found in all populations, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

Whether you provide services to gifted learners through the Gifted-Identified Program or Enrichment Model Program, creativity is part of the definition. When a school system does not include creativity, or problem solving, as assessed by the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT), you are excluding part of the state definition. During compliance monitoring, when no TTCTs are administered, this can cause two citations. Periodically, we review the Gifted Referral Tracking Logs for complete data, tests used, timelines, and types of data used. Make sure you are considering creativity and administering the TTCT, when appropriate.
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/ @alabamagifted#gtala

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Environmental Education Association of Alabama Annual Conference

February 25-27, 2015

Save the Date!!  February 25-27, 2016
Environmental Education Association of Alabama Annual Conference
Discovery: A Bridge to Learning
McDowell Camp and Conference Center
This year’s theme highlights discoveries about the natural world throughout the state of Alabama. One 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!

TALENTS UNLIMITED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES
https://docs.google.com/a/mcps.com/forms/d/1zg550-JsNhnPuXRTDOA3zQnpFEKVpD_KdWywSZtoOb5Q/viewform
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.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS VIRTUAL CONFERENCE
I had the pleasure to attend the first virtual conference hosted by the Library of Congress (LoC) on October 27 and 28. I had no time to send information to specialists, but I was tweeting about it. The good news is that you have not missed the conference. You can view the recorded sessions at the Web site: http://www.loc.gov/teachers/professionaldevelopment/webinar/online-conference-2015.html?loclr=twtea

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
**Twitter**

@Teaching_LC

Add the education staff at the Library of Congress to your professional learning network to learn about new resources, teaching strategies, and professional development activities.

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**Apps**

Aesop for Children

Free

The Library of Congress has made this interactive book of over 140 classic fables available free for IOS and Android.

 Blockly

Free

Blockly is a drag-and-drop visual programming tool that introduces children as young as 8 to fundamental programming concepts including:

- Algorithm Design
- Command Sequences and Control Flow
- Conditionals
- Loops
- Sensors and Events through creative problem solving.

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**Vernier/NSTA Technology Awards**

[http://www.nsta.org/about/awards.aspx#vernier](http://www.nsta.org/about/awards.aspx#vernier)

**Deadline: November 30, 2015**

The Vernier Technology Awards will recognize and reward the innovative use of data collection technology using a computer, graphing calculator, or other handheld in the science classroom. A total of seven awards are presented: one award at the elementary level (grades K–5); two awards at the middle level (grades 6–8); three awards at the high school level (grades 9–12); one award at the college level.

**Eligibility:** K–college. Applicants may not have won previously at their school.

**Award:** Each award will consist of $1,500 towards expenses to attend the NSTA National Conference, $1,000 in cash for the teacher, and $3,000 in Vernier products.

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**Karma for Cara Foundation Micro-Grants**


**Deadline: Ongoing**

The Karma for Cara Foundation is encouraging kids 18 and under to apply for funds between $250 and $1,000 to complete service projects in their communities. Whether it is turning a vacant lot into a community garden, rebuilding a school playground or helping senior citizens get their homes ready for winter, they want to hear what project you’re passionate about. On what student service learning projects do your students working? Have them apply for a grant to help fund their project!

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**TED Talks Playlist**

**Ken Robinson: 10 Talks on Education**

[https://www.ted.com/playlists/124/ken_robinson_10_talks_on_education](https://www.ted.com/playlists/124/ken_robinson_10_talks_on_education)

This month’s playlist are 10 talks chosen by Sir Ken Robinson. All are full of insight, bright ideas, and creativity! These talks range from What do babies think? from psychologist Alison Gopnik to turning trash into toys for leaning by Arvind Gupta to teaching arts and sciences together by Astronaut Mae Jemison to what it is like to be young and different by poet Shane Koyczan. These are inspirational talks for you. If you choose to share with students make sure you have previewed. One talk is from Kakenya Ntaiya who made a deal with her father to undergo the traditional rite of passage of female circumcision if he would let her go to high school. This young lady changed the destiny of 125 young women.

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**Inspiration by Venspired**


This is a great quote from comedienne, Amy Poehler. Spend time with people who challenge and inspire you! This will energize your passion and the creative juices will flow! Imagine the collaboration within this group. Who is your inspiration? Who is or would be in your group? Have you asked them to collaborate with you? Why are you waiting?
CONTESTS & OTHER REAL-WORLD AUDIENCES

ALSDE GIFTED WEB PAGE

**Deadline: Ongoing**

**HELP! HELP! HELP!** I still 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.

https://www.google.com/doodle4google/

**Deadline: December 7, 2015**

From cave paintings to selfies, artists have always found creative ways of expressing themselves. Now, with the Google homepage as their canvas, they are asking students to do the same. Young artists can doodle with any materials to show what makes them unique, and the winner’s artwork will be featured on the GOOGLE homepage for a day. For this year’s contest, students can create a doodle that tells the world “What makes me...me.” Kids have all kinds of things that make them unique, so they can use all kinds of materials to create their doodles, from crayons, to clay, to graphic design, even food and video games.

Students in Grades K-12 are invited to take part in the 2015 Doodle 4 Google contest. Like all Google Doodles, each doodle must incorporate the letters G-o-o-g-l-e. One national winner will also receive a $30,000 college scholarship. The contest is open for entries from October 19, 2015 to December 7, 2015.

**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!

2016 Switch Blade Competition
A project of the Alabama Center for Sustainable Energy
http://alcse.org/switchblade/

Date of Competition: Saturday, March 19, 2016

The Switch Blade Competition is a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education effort to engage the next generation in the challenge of making Alabama powered by 100% clean energy. The competition challenges high school and college students to redesign and manufacture the blades of a military wind power system originally designed for the high-speed winds of Afghanistan. The team that produces the most electricity at low speeds, more indicative of Alabama wins! Each team can receive a $500 stipend to cover the costs associated with manufacturing your blades for the wind generator. Click the link to access more information or download a registration packet to apply for this free competition. Last year only two universities and two high schools competed.

BOOK-TEACHER OR STUDENT
Happy! By Pharrell Williams

The number one hit song on the Billboard’s Hot 100 List is now a children’s book. Pharrell Williams brings his beloved song to the youngest of readers in photographs of children across cultures celebrating what it means to be happy. At the end of the story he has a letter to students to learn what makes them happy and how they make others happy. This would be a great children’s picture book to use for bibliotherapy. What lesson would you create for it?
RESOURCES

Shortening URLs
I know some of the Web links can be quite lengthy in this e-newsletter. In previous year, when I used shortened URLs in this PDF, the link became unclickable. Several of you try to “help” me with sending links to shorten the URL. I truly appreciate you helping me but there is a method to the madness! I want to share a few of these with you.

- Google URL shortener (Contributed by Gene Balding)
  https://goo.gl/
- Bitly
  https://bitly.com/
- TinyURL
  http://tinyurl.com/
- Ow.ly via Hootsuite
  http://ow.ly/url/shorten-url

Student Discovery Sets-Free iBooks
http://www.loc.gov/teachers/student-discovery-sets/
The new Library of Congress Student Discovery Sets bring together historical artifacts and one-of-a-kind documents on a wide range of topics, from history to science to literature. Interactive tools let students zoom in, draw to highlight details, and conduct open-ended primary source analysis. Full teaching resources are available for each set. These are great to add to Concept-Based Units or for classroom teachers to provide depth and complexity in their lessons.

Sets include:

- **Children’s Lives at the Turn of the Twentieth Century**
  Children of a century past: How were their lives different from today's? How were they the same? Especially for early grades.

- **The Constitution**
  The drafts and debates that brought the Constitution and the Bill of Rights into being, including notes by the documents' framers.

- **Dust Bowl**
  Songs, maps, and iconic photographs document the daily ordeals of rural migrant families during a disastrous decade.

- **The Harlem Renaissance**
  Discover some of the innovative thinkers and creative works that contributed to the cultural movement known as the Harlem Renaissance.

- **Immigration**
  The immigrant experience in America from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in primary sources.

- **The Industrial Revolution**
  The U.S.'s tumultuous transformation into an industrial power, as revealed in films, images, songs, and stories.

- **Japanese American Internment**
  Compelling photographs, including many by Ansel Adams, illuminate the experience of Japanese Americans interned during World War II.

- **Jim Crow and Segregation**
  Powerful photos and documents illuminate a century of segregation and the struggles against it.

- **Political Cartoons and Public Debates**
  Political cartoons and other documents from three centuries of U.S. history shed light on the persuasive strategies used in public debates.

- **Symbols of the United States**
  Watch six well-known symbols of the U.S. change over the centuries. Especially for early grades.

- **Understanding the Cosmos**
  Astronomers' depictions of the universe, from before Copernicus to after photography
Woman's Suffrage
The battle for women's right to vote comes to life in the scrapbooks, posters, news stories, cartoons, and firsthand accounts of suffrage activists.

Primary Source Documents Teacher’s Guides and Analysis Tools
http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/guides.html
This link takes you to the Library of Congress Web page with many, varied guides and tools to help students critically analyze primary source documents. Several of these tools help students to think about questions regarding the documents that they are viewing. The teacher’s Guides include:
- Analyzing Primary Source Documents
- Analyzing Motion Pictures
- Analyzing political Cartoons
- Analyzing Books and Other Printed Texts
- Analyzing Newspapers
- Analyzing Sheet Music and Song Sheets
- Analyzing Manuscripts
- Analyzing Oral Histories
- Analyzing Sound Recordings
- Analyzing Maps
- Analyzing Photographs and Prints

Primary Source Sets
https://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/
The Library of Congress has sets of various primary source documents grouped by topic or theme. The subjects vary from literature to history to culture to science. For example, one set is titled, Baseball: Across a Divided Society. This set uses song sheets, video clips, images, trading cards, and photographs tell the story of how baseball emerged as the American national pastime. Featured primary source items show Americans from different backgrounds and social experiences embracing the sport. Student Discovery Set (free iBooks) are included in this list. These are great to add to Concept-Based Units or for classroom teachers to provide depth and complexity in their lessons.

DIY Ideas to Repurpose Old Tires into Animal Shaped Yard Art
This link to iCreativeIdeas.com has 40+ ideas to repurpose old tires of varying sizes into animal shaped art and planters for your garden. What a great way to add playful and artistic touches to personal and school gardens! This could be a fundraiser for some of you highly motivated specialists. I would like to know what paint to use that will hold up on the tire and in the heat of the garden. What other objects can be repurposed into artistic uses at school?

Disney and Pixar Sing “Let It Go”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LcbyMj6HjEA
Here is a fun way to teach VOICE to students. Brian Hull sings “Let It Go” from the movie Frozen as 21 different Disney and Pixar characters. He is amazing! Students can see and hear how the song changes depending on the character’s personality.

Blockly Games
Blockly Games is a Google project to encourage tomorrow's programmers. The games are designed to be self-paced and self-teaching. This series of educational games that teach programming is designed for children who have not had prior experience with computer programming. By the end of these games, players are ready to use conventional text-based languages.
National Novel Writing Month
Young Writer’s Program
http://ywp.nanowrimo.org/

November is National Novel Writing Month, and the event's organizers have produced resources and tools to help young student authors participate. Check out the NaNoWriMo educators' guide for fun lessons plans to bring creative writing into the classroom. There's also a free workbook to help students write a novel in 30 days, as well as a Common Core-aligned curriculum and easy-to-use project-tracking tools.

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 More Than Just Parks at https://www.morethanjustparks.com/. Choose from four visually stunning journeys through American’s National Parks. You can watch a short film, find the film locations on the map, scroll through the photo gallery and explore the equipment used to create the film. Know that this is also being used as a fundraiser for the featured parks. Just scroll past the “Donations” section-unless your students choose to raise funds for the park.

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
Choose one

theme/topic/subject
WHY => in order to understand how (or why) ____________________________

One or more EUs

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 B.J. Melton of Birmingham City Schools. His unit, Culture Shock!, is on the Gifted Web site under Social Studies.

WHAT=> Create a plan to show how a country’s culture and economics can meet society’s needs

Topic of study

WHY=> in order to show mastery of one or more of the following:

needs and wants of a culture determine how resources are utilized (EU1);

the choices that we make have consequences and may affect our Standard of Living (EU2);

traditions and personal perspectives affect the economic needs of a society (EU 3):

needs may affect consumption (EU4); and,

geography affects economic systems (EU5).

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

HOW =>

Your nation has decided to join the United Nations (UN). Your team will present to the UN committee how your culture and its economy can meet society’s needs due to resources, geography and the economic systems. Make a list of the elements that are present in the culture. The culture's economy is one of the elements that must be developed and included, as well as the role of geography in economic systems. This society must be mindful of human rights, ethics, and equity in the development of government, business, and trade. Researching past and present cultures will be beneficial in your task.

Individuals on your team will assume careers within the culture and present your roles in the formation and maintenance of your cultures’ economy.

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

Create a plan to show how a country’s culture and economics can meet society’s needs in order to show mastery of needs and wants of a culture determine how resources are utilized; the choices that we make have consequences and may affect our Standard of Living; traditions and personal perspectives affect the economic needs of a society; needs may affect consumption; and, geography affects economic systems.

Your nation has decided to join the United Nations (UN). Your team will present to the UN committee how your culture and its economy can meet society’s needs due to resources, geography and the economic systems. Make a list of the elements that are present in the culture. The culture's economy is one of the elements that must be developed and included, as well as the role of geography in economic systems. This society must be mindful of human rights, ethics, and equity in the development of government, business, and trade. Researching past and present cultures will be beneficial in your task.

Individuals on your team will assume careers within the culture and present your roles in the formation and maintenance of your cultures’ economy.