

VBCPS Gifted and Talented Bulletin

Volume 18, Issue 2

June 2019



Director's Note: Nicole M. DeVries, Ph.D.

It is difficult to believe that the 2018-2019 school year is concluding, and we are looking onward to the start of a new school year this fall. It has been a pleasure taking time this year to further understand the intricacies of the amazing work accomplished by the gifted resource teachers in support of gifted education in Virginia Beach. This issue of the *Gifted and Talented Bulletin* features a spotlight on various school gifted programs in action, information on an exciting SENG mini-conference coming this fall, as well as information on other citywide gifted program events. The administrators in the Office of K-12 and Gifted Programs appreciate you taking the time to read the latest information for gifted education in Virginia Beach City Public Schools. Thank you for your ongoing support!

2019 Virginia Association of the Gifted: Outstanding Teacher of the Gifted Recipients



Congratulations to Lydia Kay Roberson, Gifted Resource Teacher from Frank W. Cox High School, and Vivian Barber, sixth grade math teacher from Old Donation School, who were both selected to represent our division as the *Virginia Association of the Gifted* Outstanding Teacher of the Gifted for Region II. Annually, this organization selects winners from each region of the Commonwealth of Virginia who exemplify outstanding dedication and commitment to supporting the needs of gifted learners.

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Spotlight on Gifted: Bayside Elementary School

Contributed by: Heather Schweitzer, Gifted Resource Teacher



From Hands-On Equations, Project M3 and the use of math exemplars, students at Bayside Elementary have been WORKING! Students have demonstrated their flexibility with critical thinking and problem-solving skills as they grappled with algebraic equations in the fifth grade. Meanwhile, multiple grade levels have developed their own criteria to show effective communication skills during our Math Congresses. Students are showing tremendous growth not only in their problems solving and collaborative work but in giving one another feedback to promote growth! We are proud of our gifted students at Bayside Elementary!

Spotlight on Gifted: Luxford Elementary School

Contributed by: Sharon Babbs, Gifted Resource Teacher



Luxford Dragons are magic-making mathematicians on every grade level. At Luxford, 3-Act Math Tasks are in full swing! Introduced to classes by Gifted Resource Teacher, Mrs. Babbs, these engaging, whole-group math tasks involve students problem solving practical issues, developing problem-solving skills and applying them to real-world scenarios. In some classes, students are solving the initial problem and then creating new questions to solve that are related to the tasks. In math class, Mrs. Babbs says, "Go to work!" and the mathematicians are excited to get right to it!

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Spotlight on Gifted: Lynnhaven Middle School

Contributed by: Tina Cerja, Gifted Resource Teacher



Lynnhaven Middle School Gifted scholars participated in an online book study using *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* by Sean Covey. Through 11 online modules, scholars learned to appreciate their individuality, talents, abilities and capacity to build positive, lasting relationships. The scholars actively participated through discussion boards and interactive small group workshops to further enhance their understanding and application of learned strategies.

Spotlight on Gifted: Windsor Woods Elementary

Contributed by: Amber Estep, Gifted Resource Teacher



The students in Mrs. Colombrito's third grade cluster class at Windsor Woods Elementary learned the power that their questions hold when asked to share questions that they wonder about as part of an inquiry launch for our Matter unit. One student asked, "Is DNA a solid, liquid or gas?" This question led to an amazing partnership between the third grade class and Mrs. Wyckoff's biology class at First Colonial High School. Four FC students were invited to the elementary classroom in order to extract DNA from strawberries, kiwis and bananas to find the answer. The third grade scientists returned with the answer to this question and other answers related to hybrids and cloning in order to present their findings to their classmates. The third grade students then had the opportunity to explore other questions for themselves by designing their own investigations!

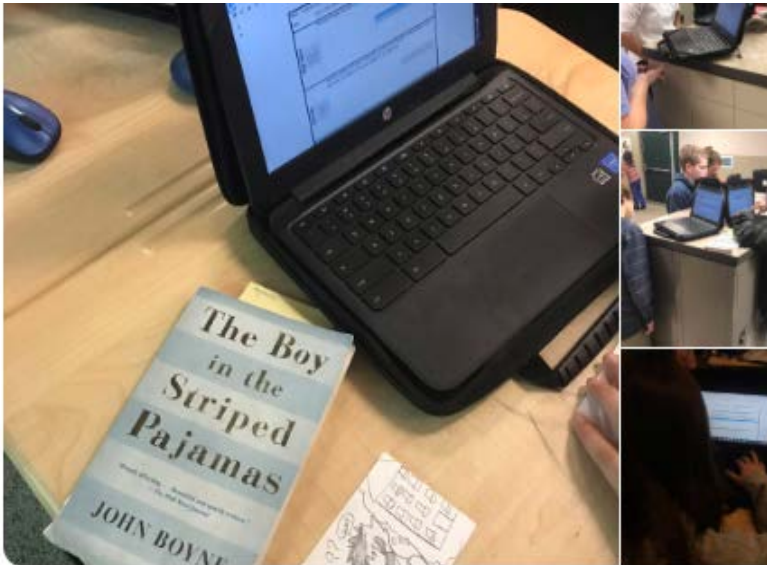
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Spotlight on Gifted: Virginia Beach Middle School

Contributed by: Meghan Malkowski, Gifted Resource Teacher



Sixth grade advanced English teachers at Virginia Beach Middle School have been busy adding rigor to their lessons aligned to the novel, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*. Gifted cluster teachers, Mrs. Collins and Mrs. Pignaloso, collaborated with Gifted Resource Teacher, Meghan Malkowski, to use Sandra Kaplan's Depth and Complexity literature circle frames to structure discussions. Students established group norms to occur during the discussions and responded to

literature circle roles that were adapted to foster higher level thinking using questions. Students had the opportunity to meet with peers who completed the same collaborative role and share their findings. At the conclusion of each literature circle session, students reflected on the experience and looked for ways to enhance their literature circles for future meetings.

Spotlight on Gifted: Landstown High School

Contributed by: Heidi Calma, Gifted Resource Teacher

Gifted students in Landstown High School's AP environmental science courses explored and identified food deserts and urban sprawl in mega cities across the globe using Google Earth. They researched and proposed components of urban agriculture using available space such as unused urban lots, rooftops and median spaces alongside roads to solve the debilitating health impacts caused by the lack of access to healthy food options. By providing options for healthy food access and empowering citizens to use available space to create urban gardens, the dependence on fast food and processed meals diminished greatly. To remedy urban sprawl, they explored how incorporating retrofitting improvements using Smart Growth principles could ease sprawl by building up and not out, by combining space usage using mixed-use zoning and by encouraging walkable neighborhoods. The students compiled all of their research using Google Tourbuilder to take their audience on a visual tour of their city, as well as to generate suggestions about how to solve critical problems these cities face.

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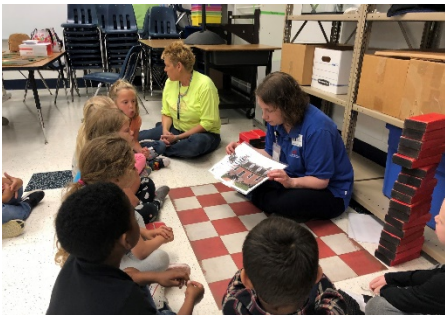


2019 E.E. Brickell Scholarship Winner: Keano W. Rich, Ocean Lakes High School

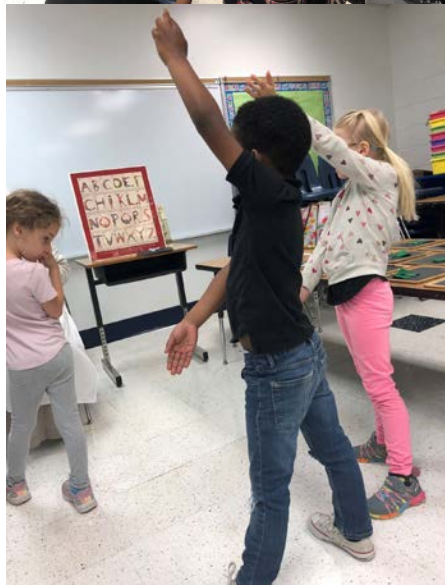
Keano W. Rich, Mathematics and Science Academy at Ocean Lakes High School, is the winner of the **Class of 2019 E.E. Brickell Scholarship** in the amount of \$6000. The Brickell Scholarship Program is sponsored yearly by the Virginia Beach Rotary Club in tandem with the Office of K-12 and Gifted Programs. The scholarship is awarded to one high school senior for their exceptional academic achievement and school involvement, including exemplary community service. Rich serves as the National Honor Society President and is also a member of the Science Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society and Mensa. He was also a Jefferson

Scholarship Finalist and a recipient of the Cornelius Vanderbilt Scholarship at Vanderbilt University, where he will be attending school this fall.

SAPLINGS: Francis Land House Partnership



Three years ago, the Virginia Beach History Museums (VBHM) partnered with the Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) Office of K-12 and Gifted Programs to provide Title I kindergarten students with a Saturday field trip for the Students And Parents Learning Intellectual Growth Strategies (SAPLINGS) program at the Francis Land House.



Due to renovations this year, Anne Miller, Vice President of the VBHM and Dornswalo Wilkins-McCorey, VBCPS Gifted Coordinator, devised an alternative plan which allowed the VBHM docents to bring the museum activities to VBCPS. As a result, the VBHM docents traveled to each Emerging Scholar Initiative (ESI) school. This opportunity provided VBHM staff time to interact with kindergarten students while classroom teachers and Gifted Resource Teachers (GRTs) scribed anecdotal notes on student performance. The classroom teachers, students and GRTs loved learning about the past, while thinking like historians and architects. After the VBHM staff visited the schools, they hosted a 'community day' at the Thoroughgood House on a designated Saturday for families free of charge.

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Save the Date!

SENG Mini-Conference Coming to VBCPS this Fall



The Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG) is a non-profit organization that has supported gifted, talented and learners who are twice-exceptional since 1981. On Saturday, November 2, 2019, The Office of Gifted Programs will be hosting a (SENG) one-day mini conference which will include keynote speakers and breakout sessions. The event will be held at Kellam High School for VBCPS teachers, parents and administrators. Additional information regarding registration and fees for attending the upcoming conference will be provided in the fall.

Last fall, The Office of K-12 and Gifted Education also offered six parent workshops during late-September and October highlighting the innovative work from the *Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted* (SENG) conference that staff members attended in San Diego, California. As a result of the collaborative work from the SENG Model Parent Group Facilitator training, a parent group was formed. This group employed the SENG model and was formed to serve as a vehicle for a small group of fifteen to twenty parents to come together and discuss social emotional issues that impact gifted children. Parents participated in a six-week novel study with a variety of topics, including communication, motivation, perfectionism and family relationships. The sessions were designed for parents of elementary identified gifted students who attend Emerging Scholar Initiative (ESI) schools.

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Virginia Beach City Public Schools

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