



GT Staff

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Rib Mountain

Thank you for taking the time to read our GT newsletter. We are working very hard to improve communication with our families, and this newsletter has become an efficient way to share information with our stakeholders. Please feel free to share any ideas YOU may have by emailing krpeterso@wausauschools.org. If it's information important to you, chances are very good that it would be meaningful to other parents as well.

GT Coordinator Corner – by Tammy Steckbauer

September 30, parents/guardians gathered at Rib Mountain Elementary School to meet their child's GT Learning Resource Teacher. Following this informal "meet and greet", a brief presentation was shared to outline what happens now that students have been formally identified as GT Math, GT Reading or GI (General Intellectual).

Formally identified students are served twice weekly during WIN time (What I Need) whenever possible. A variety of units are taught throughout the year. Other high achieving students (**Talent Pool**) are invited to participate in these opportunities when time and space allow.

The evening ended with a drawing for prizes: Two GT Parent Books and two challenging problem-solving games were given away. A resource cart was also shared and parents were encouraged to take a peek and borrow anything of interest.

For the first time in several years, we had some staffing changes and determined it was necessary to then make some changes to our building assignments in order to better balance caseloads. The following school assignments were the result:

Matt Adams- Hawthorn Hills, G.D. Jones, Riverview, Franklin, and Montessori

Heidi Hahner- South Mountain, Lincoln, John Marshall, and W.A.V.E.

Cheryl Borta- Stettin, Grant, Maine, and Thomas Jefferson

Renee Heinrich- Rib Mountain and Hewitt-Texas

Looking forward to working with our students in person this year, and hoping that your child's year is off to a great start!

STATE of WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT of PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Proclamation

Whereas, we are all responsible for the future we collectively create; all students with intellectual, academic, creative, leadership, and artistic gifts and talents are an often-untapped resource who must be appropriately identified, instructed, and supported so they, too, can help co-create our future; and

Whereas, just as giftedness comes in a variety of domains, it has no limits related to age; race, ethnicity, or national origin; economic status; sex, gender identity, or gender expression; sexual orientation; religion; multilingualism; or ability; and

Whereas, collaboration between students, families, school district staff, organizations, community members, and nations serves as the critical foundation for supporting every high-ability/high-potential child, every day; and

Whereas, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction joins the leadership of the Wisconsin Association for Talented and Gifted, the Wisconsin Center for Academically Talented Youth, the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators, the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators, the Wisconsin Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the Wisconsin RtI Center, and the Cooperative Educational Service Agencies as we work together to support Wisconsin's children with gifts and talents;

Therefore, be it resolved that, I, Dr. Jill K. Underly, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, declare in the state of Wisconsin,

Gifted Education Month

Leading the World into the Future

October 1–31, 2021



Jill Underly
Jill K. Underly, PhD, State Superintendent

Middle School Gifted and Talented Programming News

A well attended, informative meeting capped off the day on October 19th. Thank you to the many parents and students who invested their time in joining me at John Muir for the Fall GT Parents Meeting. GT Resource Counselor Cathy Ehler provided a powerful presentation regarding perfectionism, the social and emotional learning topic chosen by parents who submitted the survey I sent in late September. I'd also like to thank those who took a few minutes to complete the survey which determined the meeting's focal point. The meeting was also held virtually on October 21st.

Another parent meeting will be set up for February when I will cover second semester GT programming information, and another social emotional topic chosen by guardians and parents will be the focus. The attendance from October 21st will determine if another virtual meeting option will take place.

During the meeting, I shared about my ItsLearning course which holds many resources you may want to access if you'd like guidance from experts regarding perfectionism, motivation, organization, and other topics often pertaining to high ability students. To access: email me that you would like your child entered into my course (if not already.) Many sixth graders are participants already. Within ItsLearning, go to the course: "LEARNING EXTENSIONS-Mr. Boller," and log in with your child's login and password.

Thank you for helping to develop enrichment programming in our middle schools!
Mr. Aaron Boller
Middle School GT Resource Teacher

MEET THE TEACHER



HELLO!

My name is Mrs. Heinrich! I have been teaching in the Wausau School District for 31 years! I taught 1-5th grade in the classroom for 20 years and 11 as a K-5 Science teacher. I love STEM and engaging learners! I love teaching and finding new ways to get my students excited about learning!

FUN FACTS:

- I have four children, 3 girls and a boy. My baby just went to college so my husband and I sold our house and we are moving up north to live by the lake!
- We are building a house in Tomahawk
- We rescued a dog. He is my shadow. He is a 7 year old Weimaraner and his name is Reggie.
- I facilitated a school garden at Jefferson for 11 years!

CONTACT ME!

Monday-Friday morning I am at Hewitt Texas Elementary. On day 1 and 3 in the afternoon I am at Hewitt and day 2, 4, and 5 I am at Rib. My email is:
rheinric@wausauschools.org
and we will also use SeeSaw!

FAVORITES

I love Mountain Dew and Code Red, hiking on our land farther up north, I love berry picking in the woods, gardening, making engaging STEM activities, spending time with my family, sitting by the lake, UTV'ing, reading magazines and I love a good Netflix series. I am sure my new favorite will be teaching you!

GT Leadership Conference 2021

Program Summary

Forty fourth-graders and forty fifth-graders were invited to attend the three-day WSD Elementary Gifted and Talented (GT) Leadership Conference held on October 6th, 14th, and 20th. The GT Leadership Conference is designed to bring together some of our most talented fourth and fifth grade leaders from across the district for three days of intensive leadership training. The sessions were held at the Boys and Girls Club of Wausau. The students engaged in activities that explored what it means to be a leader, the characteristics of leadership and the traits they see in themselves and classmates that will help them develop into strong leaders. We also listened to guest community leaders who provided insight on leadership qualities. The students participated in activities involving problem solving, risk taking, decision making, planning, communicating, conflict resolution, and time management.

One of the Leadership Conference's annual goals is to introduce students to local role models who discuss the ways in which they have gained and applied leadership skills. Guest speaker/community leaders invited to meet with the students were:

- **Mr. Mark Macdonald**, owner of the Woodchucks organization, provided a tour of Athletic Park and spoke to the 4th and 5th graders about their own leadership journeys, educational background, and spoke of the importance of leadership traits such as worth ethic.
- **Molly Lewandowski**, spoke to the 4th grade students about her leadership skills especially giving back and service and her work with Peyton's Promise.
- **Officer Nick Stetzer and Badge** of Wausau East came to speak of the importance of leadership for local law enforcement in addition to learning about their therapy dog/K-9 work.
- **Sheriff Scott Parks, Marathon County Sheriff** spoke about what the Sheriff's office provides to the community and emphasized the importance of character of a person.
- **Allison Liddle**, four time best-selling author and motivational speaker, inspired the students to set goals and gave advice on how to attain them.

In addition, students from both Wausau West and Wausau East High Schools came to interact with the 5th grade students and inspire them with their own personal stories of middle and high school leadership opportunities. They also provided encouragement to our young leaders to get involved in clubs and activities as they progress through middle and high school. All of these high school leaders attended the conference back when they were in 5th grade! Wausau West students in attendance were: **Grace Albee, Khue Yang**, and **Taylor Crass**. Wausau East Students in attendance were: **Juliet Carroll, Lily Messman**, and **Maddie Burbach**.

Students and staff appreciated all of the volunteers' willingness to share their experiences with the Wausau School District's students during their busy work and school schedules.

Teachers for the Leadership Conference devoted many hours preparing and planning, making the conference a three-day success. Teachers for the Fourth Grade Conference were Mrs. Emily Martin (4th Grade Teacher, John Marshall) and Mrs. Teri Wonders (4th Grade Teacher, John Marshall). Teachers for the Fifth Grade Conference were Mr. Matt Adams (GT Teacher- WSD), and Mrs. Cheryl Borta (GT Teacher-WSD and GT Leadership Coordinator).

Continued on next page.

Who can attend the GT Leadership Conference? By state mandate, each school district in Wisconsin is required to identify students with high leadership ability as part of their Gifted and Talented program, and to provide “systematic and continuous” programming that will enable these students to develop leadership abilities to their full potential. Classroom teachers in grades 3-5 completed observation checklists to identify students with high leadership potential. Students from each elementary school who met the criteria for GT Leadership Conference were invited to attend.



Westside Elementary Leadership students with their Wausau West High School mentors, all three of which were Leadership students in 5th grade themselves!

RAISING HIGH ACHIEVERS

Gifted & Talented Social-Emotional Learning Resource

November 2021

perfect

MORE RESOURCES



[Dear Anxiety Podcast Episode 2: Tackling the Perfectionism Monster with Renee Jain and Ed Crasnick](#)

[In It Podcast by Understood.org: When Gifted Kids Need Accommodations, Too](#)

[Perfectionism: 8 Tools for Parents with Kids Afraid to Fail](#)

[Perfectionism and Gifted Students: Our Favorite Books](#)

PARENTS ASKED: HOW DO WE TACKLE PERFECTIONISM?

The Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) topic for the October Parent Meeting at the middle school was perfectionism. Nearly 50% of parents who completed the survey rated this as their top concern. If you weren't able to attend the meeting, here are some of the top takeaways.

Perfectionism is not the same as healthy striving. Perfectionism is largely about avoiding failure and risk and the belief that if I can avoid failure then I can minimize shame, blame, judgement and criticism.

Perfectionism might look like:

Analysis Paralysis – Difficulty making decisions.

Procrastination – It's easier to put off a task that I'm afraid I might fail than to show up imperfect.

No Thank You to Compliments – Compliments feel like a lie when my work doesn't align with my own unrealistic expectations for myself.

Begin, Erase, Repeat... Starting the same task over and over again when I realize that I am not on the optimal path to the final product being what I had pictured.

Emotional turmoil – Feelings of worthlessness, depression and anxiety.

BEING IMPERFECT GETS A BAD RAP!

Research shows that those who are accepting of their imperfections are less risk averse, so they *take more risks*, so they *actually succeed more*.



A PERSON WHO
NEVER MADE
A MISTAKE
NEVER TRIED
ANYTHING NEW.

— ALBERT EINSTEIN

CHALLENGING THE TRICKS OF PERFECTIONISM

Challenge your thinking: Change "This will never be good enough, why bother?" to "This is an opportunity to challenge myself." Challenge = learning.

Challenge your self-talk: Do you talk to yourself the same way you would to talk to someone you love and respect. What would you say to a friend who was having this same struggle?

The goal is PROGRESS, not perfection.

Perfectionists get stuck focusing on comparison to others. Change the focus. This is you vs. you. Are you making progress against yourself?

Beat Procrastination with Mini Actions: Don't focus only on changing thinking/mindset. Thoughts are only half as effective as taking an action. Break your task up into mini actions that are near impossible to fail.

Don't take it personally. Grades \neq Self Worth. Broaden your definition of success. Research shows that greater career success is found in who you are as a person; are you ethical, adaptable, flexible, and have the ability to work as a team and problem solve? Personal success is defined by loving relationships. Are you happy, healthy, well adjusted, and fulfilling a purpose?

Don't go it alone. Perfectionism can be a significant risk factor for serious mental health concerns. Parents might not always be able to help their children sort through faulty thoughts and perceptions about their performance. Seek out assistance from your school counselor or community counseling resources if you notice that perfectionism is starting to negatively impact your child's mental health.

If you would like to refer your child for school-based counseling or would like more information, please [complete this form](#) and your child's school counselor will contact you.

I'VE MISSED MORE THAN
9000 SHOTS
IN MY CAREER.
I'VE LOST ALMOST
300 GAMES.
26 TIMES, I'VE BEEN TRUSTED
TO TAKE THE GAME WINNING
SHOT AND MISSED.
I'VE FAILED OVER AND OVER AND OVER
AGAIN IN MY LIFE.
AND THAT IS WHY
I SUCCEED.
MICHAEL JORDAN



GT Resource Counselor



Hello! I'm the the new GT Resource Counselor for the Wausau School District. My goal is to be available to the department, to you and your children as a resource on social and emotional needs that are specific to GT students.

This is my 13th year working as a school counselor and I'm currently placed at Rib Mountain Elementary School. I'm also the mom of 3 boys, 2 of whom are currently receiving services through WSD's GT department. We are so fortunate to have such a wonderful resource in our GT teachers and the opportunities the program provides for our students in this district.

In my free time I enjoy spending time with my husband and boys. We love all things outdoors; hiking, biking, fishing, skiing and camping. My boys love sports so our evenings and weekends are often filled running to practices and games.

I look forward to getting to know more of you and working together with the GT department to support our students.

Mrs. Cathy Ehlert
cehlert@wausauschools.org
715-261-0227