



AIG Focus

Monthly Goal: I respectfully advocate for myself as a gifted learner.

Self-Advocacy

Gifted learners who speak up for themselves are more apt to find challenges and opportunities to best fit their needs. It is never too early to start teaching your child to self-advocate in both academic and social settings.

Teaching Young Children

- Don't solve every problem that arises for your child. Problem-solving builds life skills.
- Help your child decide what is important.
- Teach that advocating is not about complaining or whining.
- Practice role-playing situations where self-advocating is an option.
- Empower your child to present their suggestions to adults.

Helping Tweens and Teens

Four essential steps to successful self-advocacy for gifted learners:

1. Understand your rights and responsibilities.
2. Assess and reflect on your personal learner profile.
3. Match options and opportunities to your profile.
4. Connect with the advocates who can support your plan.

“Self-advocacy is the process of recognizing and meeting the needs specific to your learning ability without compromising the dignity of yourself or others.”

—Loring Brinckerhoff

This information is from the article, “Self-Advocacy”, from the National Association for Gifted Children.

Director’s Discussion

“No, you want that, you don’t need it.” I can still hear my parents and others saying that to me as I grew and learned. As I think about advocacy and our gifted learners, I think the discussion of want versus need is very appropriate. Needing a quiet place (or background music) in order to focus may be a want for some of us, but for others it can truly be a need. Helping our kids know what allows them to learn and be successful is a critical life-skill.

Each student has a right to learn something new through each lesson. It may be the content that we learn, a new connection we make, or just realizing that we like a topic. Students deserve to have their time valued and to learn. Helping our students know how to appropriately share that they already know a topic or that they are confused takes repetition and modeling. Kids (and often we as adults) do not innately know the right way to approach a teacher or coach and share these concerns. If we are open to the idea though, we can all grow together.

Dr. Michael Elder,

Director, College and Career Readiness

A note from your specialist...

It is surreal that 2024 is upon us. As I approach the end of my teaching career in June, I aim to capitalize on the time I have left with these amazing kids! During the summer I created a “bucket list” for this year—all the favorites and most profound units I have taught over the years. Very happy to say that we are steadily checking off the bucket list! Be sure to ask your child about these.

Bucket list for 2023-2024

- Read Frindle and recreate our own language experiment.
- Take my 5th Graders on a field trip they will remember forever.
- Create beautiful poetry using Color Poems and Blackout Poetry.
- Daily focus on Kindness and the impact a random act of kindness has.
- Rubik’s Cube for perseverance

And what’s to come...

- Read Langston Hughes works
- Gifts Valued by Society: Life of King Tut
- Hands on Equations algebra
- Recreate a play of Shakespeare

Gifted Specialist—Melissa Thomas
Melissa.thomas@onslow.k12.nc.us

