

# GIFTED EDUCATION NEWS

March 2016, Gifted Education Coordinators and Communities

## **Featured Article: Who is the gifted underachiever? Four types of underachievement in gifted children**

By Dr. Gail Post

**There is a pervasive myth that all gifted people are high achievers.**

### **But many are not.**

Most young gifted children are a ball of energy, full of life, curious, intense, and driven. Then reality sets in. They confront the limitations of school, peer pressure, others' expectations and their own fears, and some scale back their drive. Their intrinsic love of learning seems to vanish overnight.

**Underachievement may develop gradually, with less effort expended on homework, tests or projects. Or it can start abruptly.** A gifted child, once actively engaged in school, might lose all interest and motivation. Examples of underachievement include risk-aversion, cutting corners on assignments, a refusal to study, or angry rejection of the school culture.

**Gifted underachievers are a widely diverse group of children (and adults) whose behavior springs from multiple sources.** Some underachievement reflects emotional distress, family problems, or the effects of peer pressure; other times, it develops primarily in response to boredom and an absence of challenging academics. Some underachievement is more easily recognized, such as when a child starts failing at school, but sometimes it is more subtle and is overlooked.

### **Why are gifted underachievers so hard to identify?**

Although underachievement might *seem* obvious, gifted underachievers may remain hidden. Many students are not identified as gifted, their giftedness is masked by a learning disability or other twice exceptionality, or they may not fit the "gifted child stereotype" (i.e., the well-behaved, highly verbal, slightly nerdy student who always excels). As they get older, they may hide their giftedness to fit in, and as long as they are not disruptive, may be ignored. Their subpar achievement may not be recognized because they can often coast through school and receive adequate grades without exerting much effort.

**Researchers also have struggled to agree upon a clear definition of gifted underachievement.** Difficulties include the differences across studies in terms of definitions of both giftedness and achievement. The criteria and cut-offs used to identify giftedness or gifted programs have varied, with some studies using a wide range of test scores, and others settling for placement in a gifted class. And defining achievement is even more difficult.

**For the rest of this article see:**

<http://giftedchallenges.blogspot.com/2016/02/who-is-gifted-underachiever-four-types.html?m=1>

### **Upcoming event:**

**FDOE Gifted Webinar:**

**April 20, 2016, 3 p.m.**

**Author Judy Galbraith will join us to discuss the social emotional needs of gifted students based on information she has gathered from interviewing students over the years.**

For info on how to join the webinars, email [Kathleen.Casper@fldoe.org](mailto:Kathleen.Casper@fldoe.org)



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## Highlights from the

## Districts:

### JEFFERSON COUNTY STUDENTS' BLACK HISTORY HALL OF FAME By Brenda Wirick and Nancy Whitty



Turning Point School invites you to come to their Black History Museum! The students at Turning Point School, in collaboration with Jefferson County's Gifted program, have created a life-sized Hall of Fame featuring famous African Americans.

View the man able to "float like a butterfly," the woman who "knows where the caged bird lives," the Nobel Peace Prize winner who said "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world," and understand the background of a lady who once said, "Where there is not struggle there is no strength."

Students researched their famous African American and painted each historical figure brilliantly and with artistic skill. Additionally, each famous American was researched, and students electronically prepared a descriptive document highlighting the contributions and the significance of each individual.

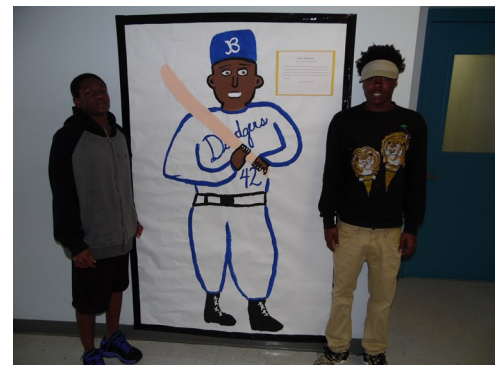
The gifts and talents of our students and their role models are evident in our halls. Come and see!!!



Spike Lee



Leontyne Price



Jackie Robinson

### COLLIER COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL LAUREATE PRESENTATIONS

Collier County high school students spend two years preparing research to present at their Laureate presentations event. The district offers a special diploma for students who do 6 Advanced Placement classes and score a 3 or higher on their AP tests, as well as research and present at the Laureate event.

Students benefit in many ways, such as learning in-depth information about a topic they are interested in, how to communicate in writing and during their presentation, how to work with others during the research process, and how to answer questions in a large audience environment. Students who achieve this recognition diploma are also given a \$1000 scholarship from the district for their accomplishment.



## **SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SUPPORT EVERY DAY AT WEST SHORE JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

Principal Rick Fleming started an inspiring daily project to emphasize social emotional support at West Shore Junior and Senior High School, a grades 7-12 magnet school in Brevard County that is known for high performance and accelerated courses and has a student population that includes many gifted students.

Soon after he started as the new principal, Mr. Fleming put every child's name on posters around a meeting room and had all of the teachers put sticky dots on the students' names that they knew. They were amazed to see how many students did not have sticky dots next to their names and they realized they needed to do something about supporting these students better.

As a result, Mr. Fleming and his staff at West Shore have looked for more ways to emphasize social emotional skill-building and changed up their operating procedures to provide gifted education support services and teambuilding activities for all students during homeroom classes each week.

Their team, including gifted endorsed teachers, helped prepare binders of activities and ideas for projects that can be used for all students and that add some additional social emotional skills building activities and a different structure of questioning in some of the content to support gifted student characteristics and needs.

Mr. Fleming is proud of the staff's efforts and he provides resources to support this initiative. He said that the teachers have risen to the occasion by creating a collegial, teamwork-based homeroom for the students where they have the opportunity to gather personal information about their students through their daily interactions and provide social emotional support as needed. The students stay in those homeroom classes throughout their entire junior and senior high school years, which creates even more bonding and allows the students to feel like homeroom is really their home within the school campus.



**Don't forget to register to  
attend the**

**National Association for  
Gifted Children (NAGC)  
Annual Conference in  
Orlando, Florida on  
November 3-6, 2016!**

**For more information see  
[www.NAGC.org](http://www.NAGC.org)**



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