

D51 Gifted Education Newsletter

August/September 2023

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News from our GT Director

It has been an amazing and exciting start to the 2023-24 school year. Believe it or not, the start of September brings us almost to the halfway point of the 1st quarter. Hopefully, you are feeling back in the routine but also still feeling the excitement that comes with the start of the year.

The gifted education department is back in the swing of supporting and training to help schools and families. Here are important dates and items for you to be aware of at this time of year:

- Students formally identified gifted will be developing their Advanced Learning Plan goals (academic/interest and affective) by September 29th. Each school does this process a little differently, so don't be afraid to reach out to your GT Teacher/Liaison with questions.
- Elementary GT Teachers will be setting up and supporting advanced students within their Talent Pool groups. This is for students not formally identified but in need of support beyond classroom instruction. Again, this looks different at each school so reach out to your GT Teacher with questions.

D51

FOUR CORE BEHAVIORS

D51 focuses on the whole learner to foster growth and high achievement.

D51 believes in the strengths of our people, our schools, and our communities.

D51 values individuality, inclusivity, and belonging.

D51 commits to continuous improvement.

VISION

Engage, equip, and empower each and every student, each and every day.

MISSION

D51 engages our community, families, and staff to deliver individualized, collaborative, and challenging educational experiences to prepare each and every student for their brightest future.

- The Colorado Association for Gifted and Talented [5th Annual Student Art Contest](#) is open and accepting applications until September 11th.
- Don't forget...[GT Scholarships](#) are available for D51 students to assist with tuition for enrichment programs for students throughout the year.

I also want to announce Bill Larsen as the interim GT Director for D51 during the 23-24 school year. Mr. Larsen will be returning to Mesa County Valley School District 51 after a long history of support. He taught for 11 years in middle school and high school. Additionally, he was in administration as an Assistant Principal, Principal, Executive Director of High Schools, and Chief Academic Officer. He is one of the most positive people I have ever met and has an incredible understanding of supporting systems. I have learned so much in working with him in the past and during this transition. Bringing in his knowledge and expertise has allowed me to feel confident in moving on to my next learning adventure. Starting September 5th, I will be the Assistant Director of Gifted Education for the Colorado Department of Education. D51 has been my work home for almost 25 years and this is a bittersweet transition. However, I'm excited for the opportunity to continue to

grow and support gifted education at a state level.

Talking Books with Brandy

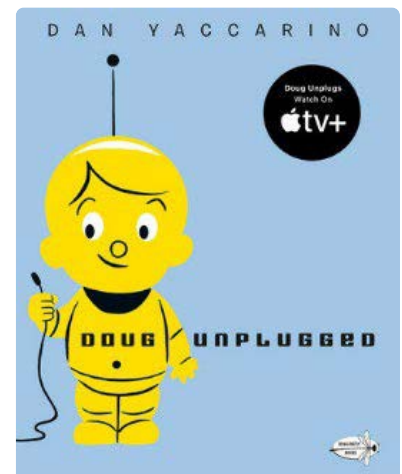
Brandy Headlee, GT Coach

Aug/Sept book theme: Robots

Picture Book: [Doug Unplugged](#) by Dan Yaccarino

Read Aloud Story Time: [Doug Unplugged](#)

Doug is a robot who usually plugs in every morning for school. But today, he decides to unplug and visit the city in person. There, he learns many new things, including how to play and the value of a friend and a loving family. This sweet story shows the importance of unplugging.



As you read, explore questions about how we learn: How do experiences affect people? Can unplugging technology be good? How do people change (or adapt) to where they live? What would happen if we didn't have technology?

Middle-Grade Book: [The School for Whatnots](#) by Margaret Peterson Haddix

[The School for Whatnots](#) book trailer

No matter what anyone says, I'm real.

That was the note Max's best friend left under his keyboard the last time he saw her.

Ever since Max and Josie met in kindergarten, they have been inseparable. That is until the end of the 5th grade party when Josie left Max's house for the last time. Desperate to find her and unravel this mysterious note, Max begins his journey of discovery. At the same time, Josie begins searching for Max to tell him the truth. In the end, against all odds, Max and Josie might just uncover the solve the biggest mystery of them all.

As you read, explore questions about identity, including: What does it mean to be an insider or an outsider? What does it mean to be alive? What emotions or ideas lead to developing or destroying human dignity? How do multiple perspectives influence or impact individuals and their treatment in a community? How might perception influence our understanding of reality? What does it mean to be a friend? How might friendships influence our actions?

Young Adult Book: [The Goddess in the Machine](#) by Lora Beth Johnson

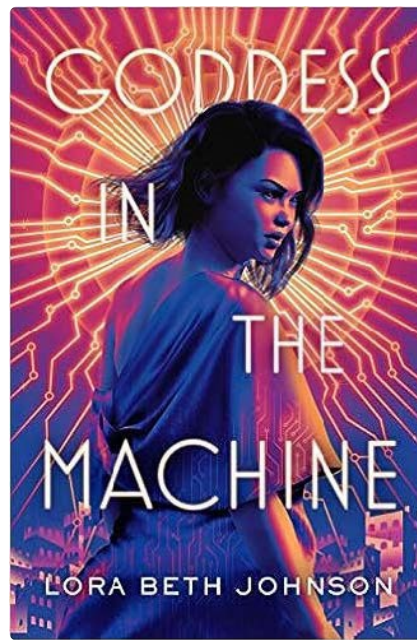
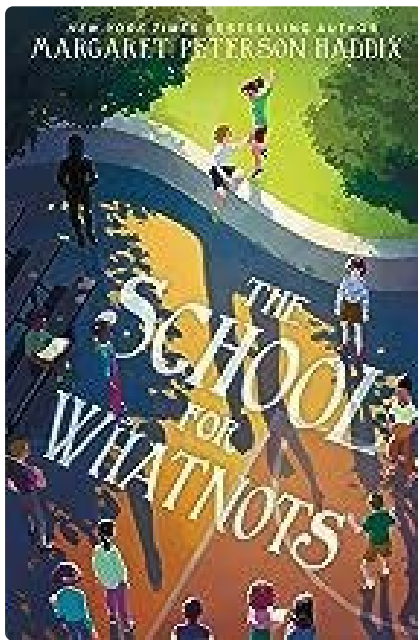
[The Goddess in the Machine](#) book trailer

1,000 years after she fell into a cryogenic sleep, Andra wakes up on the surface of a foreign desert planet. Confused and scared, she realizes that everyone she ever knew is dead. She is alone with so many questions.

Where is she? Where is the ship she was on? Why does everyone keep calling her Goddess?

With the help of an exiled prince, Zhade, Andra finds herself in the last safe city on the planet facing a cruel king who expects her to perform miracles. Miracles that will save the city from death and destruction. As she tries to interface with outdated technology, Andra is on the cusp of saving the city and herself when the reality of her situation finally becomes apparent. Nothing is as it seems on the surface.

As you read, explore questions about water: What happens in a system when resources are limited? What happens when resources are inequitably allocated? How do humans and the natural world interact? How does where we live impact how we live? What is your responsibility to yourself, your community, and the world?



Student Accomplishment

Submitted by Tina Sleigh, Challenge Facilitator @ Orchard Mesa Middle School

As part of his 7th grade GT Community Unit and D51 Design Challenge entry, Jerraun Dunhaum, a former East Middle School student, honored his former school with a memorabilia display at Museum of the West! The display showcases many special items from East. He began working on the project in the spring and finished it over the summer. The theme of the Design Challenge was, Small Acts Lead to Big Change. This display was a way for Jerraun to show the community and his classmates the impact EMS had on him, and as a way to help understand the consolidation. You can now view the East Middle School exhibit at Museum of the West located at 462 Ute Ave now until the end of September.





Scholarship Application

2023-2024 Scholarship Application.pdf

[Download](#)

88.7 KB

2023-2024 Scholarship Application (spanish).pdf

[Download](#)

76.8 KB

Facebook

Westslope CO Gifted & Talented

This group is to support Westslopes Parents of Gifted & Talented and 2E kids.

We share hope, empowerment, ideas, opportunities, and overall support each other.





Social & Emotional Learning Basics

Social and emotional learning, or SEL, helps us all -- children and adults alike -- develop the skills we need for every area of life, from academics and careers to healthy relationships and overall well-being. SEL can help kids stay motivated, communicate effectively, practice curiosity, and work with others to solve problems.

The CASEL Framework:



The CASEL "wheel" is a framework for helping young people learn and practice social and emotional skills. It focuses on five key areas:

- **Self-awareness:** Understanding emotions, thoughts, and behaviors
- **Self-management:** Managing our emotions and actions
- **Social awareness:** Understanding others
- **Relationship skills:** Building and maintaining connections with others
- **Responsible decision-making:** Making caring and constructive choices

It also highlights the four "settings" where young people learn and practice these skills: their homes, classrooms, schools, and communities.

Who is CASEL?

We are the Collaborative for Social, Emotional, and Academic Learning (CASEL), a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization on a mission to support high-quality, evidence-based SEL for all children.



COLLABORATIVE FOR
ACADEMIC, SOCIAL, AND
EMOTIONAL LEARNING
casel.org

Want to learn more about
SEL? Sign up for our three-
part email series.

bit.ly/CASELnewsletter



*Healthy School Meals
— for All is —
More than a Meal*

**More than a Meal
Application Includes**

For Schools:

- Extra staff to support teachers
- Discounted internet costs
- Equipment grants to
- Improve meal quality

For Students:

- Discounted utility and internet
- Waived Curricular fees
- Discounted AP test fees
- Discounted bus passes



Scan the QR Code or visit
bit.ly/d51morethanamealapp

D51

*This institution is an
equal opportunity provider*

We can #KeepCOCovered



Get ready to renew your Medicaid coverage now!



Update your contact information and sign up for notifications in the Health First Colorado app and in your PEAK account.



Respond by the date in your letter – you'll get this in the mail and by email.



Don't forget to sign your renewal packet.



Turn in documentation through Health First Colorado app, mail, online at co.gov/PEAK.

What if I don't qualify for Medicaid or CHP+?

You have a limited amount of time to apply for other coverage.

Other health coverage options include:

- **Employer** coverage, check with your employer to learn about options, rules and deadlines.
- Coverage through a **family member's** health insurance.
- Coverage through **Connect for Health Colorado** (Colorado's official health insurance marketplace). You might qualify for reduced premiums. Visit: connectforhealthco.com/we-can-help/
- Coverage through **Medicare**, for people age 65 or older or people under 65 with certain disabilities. Visit: dol.colorado.gov/colorado-medicare-health/drug-insurance-coverage-options
- Coverage for **active or former military, naval, or air service** through Tricare (active) at tricare.mil/ or VA (veterans) at va.gov/health-care/apply/application/

Review Your Options. Stay Covered.

- To get free help enrolling in Connect for Health Colorado marketplace coverage, reach out to a certified assister online at connectforhealthco.com/we-can-help/assisters/ or by calling 855-752-6749. TTY: 855-346-3432.
- To get free help filling out an application for Health First Colorado or CHP+ coverage, or to learn about other coverage options, contact a Certified Application Assistance Site here: apps.colorado.gov/apps/maps/hcpf.map

Get more information on your options:



hfcgo.com/options

KeepCOCovered.com

Blackout Competitive League ("AAU") 2023

5th & 6th Grade Girls Tryouts

Monday Aug. 28 6:00 pm at West MS (for girls in Fruita school area)

Wednesday Aug. 30 6:00 pm at West MS (for girls in GJHS school area)

Thursday Aug. 31 6:00 pm at Mt. Garfield MS (for girls in Central and Palisade school area)

Players must tryout for the school area they live in

REGISTRATION FORM:

<https://gjblackout.com/registration-forms/bcl-tryout-questions/>

For more information or questions, contact:
coachdean@gjblackout.com



5th/6th GIRLS
Competitive
BASKETBALL

WE ARE HIRING

NUTRITION SERVICES

- Prepare and serve nutritious, from-scratch meals to D51 students
- The ideal schedule for working parents
- PERA & Health Benefits
- Fuel successful learning

Apply at:

[BIT.LY/D51NUTRITIONJOBS](https://bit.ly/d51nutritionjobs)

School District 51
MESA COUNTY VALLEY



FORGET-ME-NOT

Family Grief Support Group

Thursday Evenings
September 21 - November 9
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Ferris Care Center, Room 102
3090 N. 12th Street
Dinner will be provided.

Join HopeWest Kids for Forget-Me-Not, a grief support group that children and family members attend together. The group, open to all ages, provides a safe and caring place to explore grief and its impact on the family.

Forget-Me-Not offers education and support regarding the grieving process through the use of games, art and craft projects and music. Children and teens will work in age-specific groups, and parents will have a separate group, allowing participants to connect with peers facing similar experiences.

At the conclusion of the group, each family will receive a memory bear or pillow, lovingly sewn by a HopeWest volunteer, out of a garment of clothing from the family's loved one who died. It will serve as a special memory object for the family to treasure as they learn along their grief journey.

Space is limited and registration is required.
For more information and to register
call (970) 257-2390.



HopeWest
30 YEARS OF EXCEPTIONAL CARE



Become a Volunteer Storyteller!

Ignite Imagination ★ Encourage
Literacy ★ Connect Generations

Spellbinders® Trained Storytellers share the rich oral tradition of tales that teach and enchant. Spellbinders® trained volunteer Storytellers usually tell (rather than read) stories once a month to students in grades K-5. Working with teachers, Storytellers enhance literacy, stimulate imagination, and broaden multicultural understanding.

A Spellbinders® Trained Storyteller:

- ★ Shares stories in classrooms on a regular and personally convenient schedule to:
 - Enhance students' listening and visualization skills
 - Brighten the lives of young listeners and expand their worldview
- ★ Becomes a "superstar" to an enthusiastic group of youngsters
- ★ Has more FUN than you can imagine!!!
- ★ Stays mentally sharp by learning and sharing new stories
- ★ Meets other interesting people

Receives on-going support during and after training: ○ consultation with a Certified Spellbinders® Trainer ○ access to extensive collections of stories and resources ○ monthly chapter meetings with mini-workshops ○ story ideas and suggestions from fellow volunteers

How do **YOU** join this team? Participation in four, 3-hour training classes is a prerequisite to becoming a certified Spellbinders® storyteller. The cost is \$75.00 which covers training materials, a name badge, and the required background check. You will receive tips on how to find, learn, and tell stories and will hear stories from active Spellbinders. You will practice telling stories and receive constructive feedback. Following the classroom training, you will observe an

experienced teller in a classroom, share a story, and receive feedback from that teller.

CLASSES STARTING SOON!

9:00 AM to Noon

Thurs. Oct. 5, and Tues. Oct. 10 and

Thurs. Oct. 12, and Tues. Oct. 17.

For more information or to register for classes contact:
lauriekollasch@gmail.com

CAGT Happenings



Conversations with CAGT

Conversations With CAGT

1st and 3rd Tuesdays each month at 5:00 pm MST on [Facebook Live](#)

Conversations with CAGT is back with an all-new season of timely, relevant topics by preeminent local, national, and international specialists in the field of gifted education! CWC has a new format this season with programs premiering on the **first and third Tuesdays of the month** at 5:00 pm MST on Facebook Live. [Check out past Conversations with CAGT programs on our website.](#) where you may rewatch experts anytime, including Linda Silverman, Jim Delisle, Julie Skolnick, Jonathan Mooney, Joy Lawson Davis, Jaime Castellano, and many others. *Conversations with CAGT* is an incredible opportunity to get expert advice on topics regarding giftedness for FREE with time to ask your questions. The best part is that as a CAGT member your questions get priority! Join us on the **first and third Tuesdays of the month** at 5:00 pm MST on [Facebook Live](#)!



imagine
believe
grow
cagt2023

Exciting Opportunities for Students!

We have two great opportunities for students to showcase their talent with the 2023 CAGT Conference Attendees.

Art Contest

CAGT would like to invite students from around Colorado to share their outstanding artistic talents with the attendees at this year's conference.

Students who attend any K-12 school or homeschool can create their artistic interpretation of our conference theme,

Imagine, Believe, Grow and share it with us this fall at CAGT's Annual Conference, October 8-10, 2023.

Accepted artwork will be displayed at the John Q Conference Center at the Embassy Suites in Loveland for our conference participants to view and vote on their favorites.

All contest information criteria are included in this flier [link](#).

Talent Video

Calling all Colorado K-12 students.

We challenge you to create a TikTok-style video (about 20 seconds long) showing off your amazing talent! We're looking for something that other people your age can't do as well as you.

The best videos will be compiled into a student talent video showcase that will be shown at this year's CAGT Conference.

Colorado students... show us what you've got!

Link to poster ([English](#) & [Spanish](#)) and [detailed](#) information.

Rocky Mountain PBS



The Phoenix Gold Mine is educational and entertaining

A mom of an eight-year-old boy called me as a last resort. In the days before making the call, she met with the classroom teacher, the school director and the school psychologist. She spent time in the classroom, observed from her car during recess and kept a close eye on him during his soccer games on the weekend. No matter how much investigating she did, she couldn't figure out why her son seemed so unhappy every afternoon.

This mom went on to describe a scenario that I hear from parents of school age children over and over again: He's bright and happy in the morning, but completely miserable when he gets home. He lashes out at his parents, he can't get along with his siblings and he falls apart for no real reason. At first, she thought exhaustion was to blame. After a couple of weeks, she began looking for clues at school. What she found out too her by surprise: He was perfectly fine in school all day. In fact, his teacher couldn't think of a single issue that might cause the meltdowns.

Going to school can be completely exhausting for many kids. The school day can be physically, emotionally and mentally draining. Young children expend a lot of energy sitting still and focusing in class. They have rules to follow, work to complete and responsibilities to fulfill. Many of them



lack sufficient time to play, run and regroup throughout the day. By the time they get home from school, they are quick to fall apart.

The bad news is that kids tend to save their most difficult behavior for their parents. The silver lining is that they trust us to help them through those trying moments and to love them anyway. The good news in all of this is that we make simple changes to help kids cope with the overwhelming emotions that often settle in once the day is done. Here's how:

Leave the questions for later. It's no big secret that busy is the new normal, and sometimes this leads to immediate questions about what kids learned during the school day, how much homework needs to get done and what happened during recess. We engage in insta-catch-up during the ride from here to there because we want to connect with our kids, but most kids need time to decompress and zone out before discussing the daily play-by-play.

A simple greeting and a hug or high-five is a great way to connect and provide emotional space from the school day. "I'm so happy to see you!" is my favorite after school greeting with my own kids. They both meet me with big smiles when I start with a positive statement.

Prioritize downtime. Kids need time to play, hang out, read or create on their own terms.

Unstructured time is the first thing to go when families get busy, and that can have big repercussions for kids.

After school routines should include plenty of time for kids to unwind and engage in free play.

Be present. We worry about the impact of screen time on the developing brain, but we forget that our own screen time use can negatively impact our relationship with our kids. If your child senses a disconnect, he will retreat. It's important for us to disconnect from our phone and other screens when our kids come home from school.

The best way to reconnect with our kids is to be present when they are in our presence. Make eye contact. Listen with intent. Let your child speak without attempting to fix any identified problems. Often, children need someone to listen while they work through their feelings and problem-solve out loud.

Play together. I often recommend playing a board game or a simple card game with children right after school. Spending time playing quietly together or reading together helps ease kids out of the overwhelming feelings that the end of the day brings and into a calmer state of mind.

Snack it up. Get ahead of the hunger crash by planning the after school snacks in advance. Many children come home starving and dehydrated, even if they communicate otherwise. This is not the time to try new foods, however. Put out snacks they enjoy with tall glasses of water and sit with them while they refuel.

Create a homework routine. Prevent homework wars by setting up a clutter-free spot to work and trying to do the homework at the same time each day. Set a timer and allow for plenty of breaks. If your child is struggling, write a note to the teacher and close the books for the day.

Kids are under increased pressure today. They are learning academics earlier and earlier. They also don't have enough time to release energy. It's no surprise our kids return home in a compromised state. It's important for us to let our kids get back to the business of being a kid to help decrease stress and improve their emotional well-being.

Author:

Katie Hurley, LCSW, is a child and adolescent psychotherapist, parenting expert, and writer. She is the founder of "Girls Can!" empowerment groups for girls between ages 5-11. Hurley is the author of *No More Mean Girls* and *The Happy Kid Handbook*, and her work can be found in *The Washington Post*, *Psychology Today*, and *US News and World Report*.

D51 Gifted & Talented Department



ADVANCED LEARNING DEPARTMENT
EQUIP, EMPOWER, ENGAGE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 51

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D51 - Gifted and Talented

GT Department is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters