

D51 Gifted Education Newsletter

December 2023

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News from our GT Director

The first four months of this school year have passed by so quickly and our best hope is for you to see that your student is making progress cognitively, socially, and emotionally. Keeping balance within all three of these areas will lead to a healthier and happier individual. Speaking of balance, this time of the year also ushers in the holiday season which should bring a sense of joy and excitement, but may also bring unexpected challenges with unstructured time and events. Psychologist Kazimierz Dabrowski reminds us that gifted young people are often more aware, stimulated, and affected by their surroundings. Physical and emotional reactions may occur during the holidays and cause extreme positive or negative feelings along with laughter or tears.



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.

Referencing the Institute for Educational Advancement blog [Intensity Within the Gifted](#), these reactions can come as a surprise to both the parent and the child. Guided imagery and meditation exercises are an excellent way to help master these extreme intensities. According to Dr. Michael Piechowski, a good place to start is with a simple exercise. Have your child close his or her eyes, breathe deeply, and say with the breath, “Breathing in I calm my body. Breathing out, I smile.” Learning to use the mind to control the body through exercises like this is an important step in mastering intensities.

During the holidays, we might also be challenged if routines are changed or interrupted. Within the article [Enjoying the Holidays with a House Full of Gifted Folks](#), we are reminded of a few simple tips that might help; **Get moving**. Physical activity releases endorphins in the brain and can be an instant pick-me-up. Throw in a little healthy eating and you have a winning combination. **Don't set unreasonable expectations for yourself and others**. Allow yourself time to feel sad, overwhelmed, or frustrated so that you can move on and celebrate during the moments that count. Know what to expect from family and friends over the holidays, and you'll be better able to prepare for when you see them. **Designate**

quiet time and spaces. When expecting a full house for the holidays, plan ahead and make sure that everyone has a safe haven to retreat to and time to recharge. Finally, **Surround yourself with good cheer**. Seek out the people in your life who make you feel better and avoid those who contribute to feelings of anxiety and unhappiness.

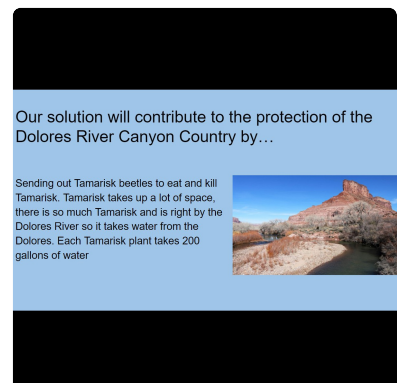
We hope the holiday season brings you and your family time to enjoy together along with some much-needed individual rest and relaxation. Take time to “breathe” and enjoy this special time of the year.

Student Spotlight

Submitted by Rochelle Morrison, GT Teacher at Tope Elementary School

The 5th grade students at STEAM@Tope Elementary recently took part in Problem Based Learning (or PBL) and learned about why protecting the Dolores River Canyon is important for the preservation of wildlife and fish species. Their problem statement was **“How can our STEAM @Tope community contribute to the cause of protecting the Dolores River Canyon Country?”**

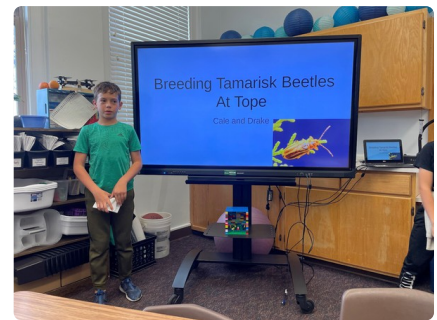
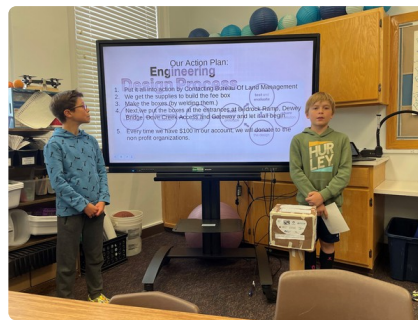
They started researching the perspectives and causes of the issues related to their problem statement. Students learned from guest speakers and other experts about the depth of the problem. Some of the lenses or perspectives



that the students learned about were agricultural, cultural, recreational, water conservation and land conservation.

Students also attended a day at the Outdoor Wilderness Lab in Gateway for some hands-on learning. After all of their learning, students came up with solutions that they thought were viable and presented their ideas to a panel of community members. Here are a couple of the ideas that the GT 5th grade students came up with.

Box Boys presented an idea to make a fee box for recreational use of the Dolores Canyon Country that you would make a donation with a QR code when you use the Dolores Canyon for a recreational event. Another idea for a solution was called **Please Mister Postman**. This group wanted to have Tope students and families write a letter to the president to make the Dolores Canyon Country a national monument. Another idea was **5th Grade Fishery** which would get fish tanks for our school that would allow 5th graders to raise native fish like Razorback Sucker, Humpback Chub, Bonytail Chub, Colorado Pike Minnow, and Roundtail Chub from eggs to release into the Colorado River System when they were the right size. **Breeding Tamarisk Beetles** at Tope was another solution idea. This idea would be that 5th graders would breed Tamarisk Beetles in the Makerspace room at Tope so that they could release them to the Dolores River Canyon Country to help mitigate the tamarisk since the tamarisk takes so much water from the Dolores River.



Student Work

Submitted by Debbie Beth Hoffman, GT Teacher at Orchard Mesa Middle School



One of the NAGC standards for learning is: Students with gifts and talents possess a developmentally appropriate understanding of how they learn and grow; they recognize the influences of their beliefs, traditions, and values on their learning and behavior. Students were given scaffolding about how we can define a value and multiple lists of possible values combined with group discussion to ensure understanding of the place values have in our lives. They were then asked to share how they feel their values impact their learning and relationships with others.

Values

By Lilamae Kellerby

My definition of value is that it is a positive quality for you. Also, you aren't mad at yourself for having it. You like yourself for having it. You feel good about it. You prize and cherish them. One of my values is honesty and integrity. Another value of mine is love, friendship, and personal closeness. One more of my values is family and emotional security. All of these different values have different meanings to me. If they were all the same, then I wouldn't have very many things that I truly care about. If I were to only have one value, I probably wouldn't have very many things, and I wouldn't be a very deep person.

First, one of my values is honesty and integrity. To me honesty means acting straight forward and fairly. Integrity to me means strictly following what you believe is right and good. Having honesty is very important to me because I really like having people around me who trust me and who I trust. I really want people's trust. I also want them to trust me. This can help me in my learning by knowing that I will tell the teacher the truth, and eventually gaining their trust. Then they will know that they will always be able to trust me. Having integrity is just as important to me as having honesty. I really like to do the right thing. If I do something wrong, then it is always on my mind until I make it right. I also like seeing people doing the right thing. If there is any way that I can help do something good or right, I would want to do it.

Next, another one of my values is love, friendship, and personal closeness. What love means to me is feeling a strong desire or attraction toward a person or idea. Friendship to me means having a relationship based on mutual respect and good will. Personal closeness to me means knowing who I am, and not changing for anybody else. Having love as one of my values is important to me because I want to love my family and friends. I want them to love me back. If I ever feel like somebody I love doesn't love me back, I find out. Then I find out if there is a way for them to love me just as much as I love them. This can help me in my learning because if I ever feel sad in class I can always remember that I have people who love me. Having friendship as one of my values is amazing. I really like having good relationships with my friends. I always want the best for them. If there is anything that I can do to help them out, I will. If they are sad I will be there for them. I know that they will do the same for me. This can help me with my learning because if we are allowed to work together, Then I can work with my friends. When I work with my friends I go alot faster than when I am working with other people. Personal closeness is so important to me because knowing who I am has been difficult for me. When times got hard I questioned who I was. But now, knowing who I am is so helpful in hard times. And I know that I wouldn't change for anybody. This can help me in my learning because when I am getting upset or frustrated I can think of all of the good things that I have.

Lastly, family and emotional security. Family to me is having close people that you can talk to and trust. To me emotional security is wanting closure and having different ways to cope with different emotions. Family is so important to me. I need them for everything. It feels good to know that there is someone in the world who does love and care for you. And I want my family to know that I love and care for them too. It always feels good when you have a family supporting you in whatever you're doing. This can help me with my learning because if I have homework, and don't know how to do something, then I can ask for help and I know that my family will be there. Emotional security is harder for me. I have not been the best at exercising and showing my emotions. If I am upset I can now use coping skills. If someone is hurt, I need to know if it is bad. If I don't then I will start to get really worried. This can help me in my learning. If I am upset during class, I can use coping strategies to calm myself down so that I can get back to my learning.

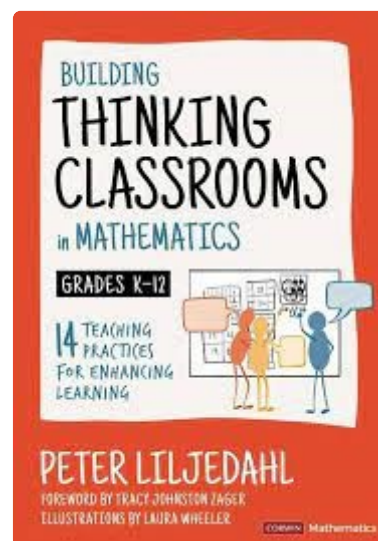
Those are only three of my values. I have so many more. Again what value means to me is that it

of my values are honesty and integrity, love, friendship, personal closeness, family, and emotional security.

Teacher Recommendation

Recommended by Shawn Carstensen-Hayes, GT Teacher at Orchard Avenue Elementary

When you walk into a classroom and see learners in small groups throughout the room standing at a whiteboard or another vertical non-permanent surface engaged in a mathematical task, you have to stop and ask what is going on. This is what happened when I entered our fifth-grade classrooms in our school. I saw learners excitedly discussing a math problem, sharing a marker and writing down their thinking. The teacher noticed my questioning face and said she and her teaching partner read the book by Peter Liljedahl, *Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics*.



So what would any educator do, they would read the book too. This book challenged how I view not only a mathematics classroom but any classroom. There are 14 teaching practices that Peter encourages teachers to do to enhance student learning specifically for math. I feel many of these teaching practices could be for any classroom and any content area. Who doesn't want a thinking classroom?

Here are the 14 teaching practices:

1. What types of tasks we use
2. How we form collaborative groups
3. Where students work
4. How we arrange the furniture
5. How we answer student questions
6. When, where, and how tasks are given
7. What homework looks like
8. How we foster student autonomy
9. How we use hints and extensions
10. How we consolidate (summarize / wrap up) a lesson
11. How students take notes
12. What we choose to evaluate
13. How we use formative assessment
14. How we grade

Peter spent countless hours in K-12 classrooms working with teachers and students with these 14 practices. He also spent time interviewing students to get their feedback and insights. He believes that "most of our students do an awful lot of "studenting" or "mimicking," but not much thinking. Thinking is a necessary precursor to learning and if students are not thinking, they are not learning."

When I think of the role of the Gifted Education teacher for the Advance Learning Department in our district, our goal is to be facilitators of thinking. This book is paving a way for how we can do that work and how we might do this work alongside classroom teachers. Because we all want greater student engagement, more active learning, greater student enjoyment, increased student responsibility, higher performances, easier and faster movement through content, these practices can help us create a culture where thinking is not only valued but also necessitated.

If you are a fan of [Open Middle](#) and [Real World](#) problems, then read [Robert Kaplinsky's review of the book](#). His review will definitely convince you to read the book.

Families who are interested in what this could mean for your child, Peter wrote [this article](#) summarizing his book in Edutopia. Check it out.

Also for families, here are some of the highly thinking tasks Peter Liljedahl offers for varying age groups. Enjoy listening to your child's thinking.

Grades K-5: Farmer John

A farmer has some chickens and some pigs. One day they notice that their animals have a total of 22 legs. How many chickens and how many pigs might they have? Can you come up with another solution? And another? Can you come up with all the solutions? How do you know that you have all the solutions?

Grades 6-9: Painted Cube

A $3 \times 3 \times 3$ cube, made up of 27 $1 \times 1 \times 1$ cubes, is dipped in a bucket of paint. After the paint has dried, the $3 \times 3 \times 3$ cube is taken apart into its 27 individual cubes. How many of these individual cubes have paint on three sides, two sides, one side, zero sides? What if it were a $4 \times 4 \times 4$ cube? What if it were a $5 \times 5 \times 5$ cube? What if it were a $10 \times 10 \times 10$ cube? What if it were an $n \times n \times n$ cube?

Grades 10-12: 3D Tic-Tac-Toe

In a standard game of tic-tac-toe, a win occurs when 3 X's or 3 O's are all in a row (colinear). There are 8 ways to win in a standard game of tic-tac-toe - three up and down, three side to side, and two diagonally. How many ways are there to win in 3D tic-tac-toe, where the rules are the same - a win is 3 colinear X's or O's?

I have also included resources from this book for families and teachers (you can subscribe to the website to get the problems in your inbox):

[Problem of the Week](#) - These problems are designed to provide students with an ongoing opportunity to solve mathematical problems. Each week, problems from various areas of mathematics will be posted here and e-mailed to teachers/families for use with their students from grades 3 and up.

[Problem of the Month](#) - These problems are intended to challenge enthusiastic high school math students. Most problems are designed with the assumption that students attempting them have a solid understanding of grade 11 math, but some problems may still be of interest to motivated

younger students. A new problem will be posted on the first Tuesday of every month starting in October. A hint will follow 10 days later, and a solution another 10 days after that.

Challenge Program @ Orchard Mesa Middle School

For 5th grade students interested in applying to the Challenge Program for the 2024-2025 school year, information meetings at Orchard Mesa Middle School will be held:

- January 22 at 4:30 pm
- January 23 at 6:00 pm

What is [The Challenge Program](#)?

The Challenge Program is a District 51 program open to any academically gifted middle school student in the Grand Valley. The program started in 1999 at East Middle School and moved to Orchard Mesa Middle School in the fall of 2023. Students must apply to be in this program; typically 5th graders apply for their 6th grade year and stay for three years. Students only need to apply in 6th grade, but may re-apply in 7th or 8th grade if they are not accepted in 6th grade. There is one core of up to 28 students in the Challenge Program at each grade level. Challenge students attend all core classes together (Literacy, Math, Social Studies, and Science). However, they attend their exploratory and Advisory classes with the general school population.

**The World Awaits
What D51 Challenge Creates**

The Challenge Program
2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR INFORMATIONAL MEETING

"Some students require the climate, interaction, and independence found in a program designed especially for gifted students." -Autonomous Learner Model

ORCHARD MESA MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA
2736 C ROAD

MONDAY, JANUARY 22 AT 4:30PM
TUESDAY, JANUARY 23 AT 6:00PM

The Challenge Program, now at Orchard Mesa Middle School, is a district-wide program for academically gifted middle school students. After giving an overview of the program, students and staff will be available for questions.

Parents, bring your interested student along!

Applications will be available starting January 22 and accepted until 4pm on February 26, 2024

MORE INFORMATION : Contact Tina Sleigh at tina.sleigh@d51schools.org with questions.
[The Challenge Program Website](#)

**El Mundo Espera lo que
crea Challenge D51**

El Programa Challenge
AÑO ESCOLAR 2024-2025 REUNION INFORMATIVA

"Algunos estudiantes necesitan el ambiente, la interacción y la independencia que se encuentran en un programa diseñado especialmente para estudiantes superdotados". -Modelo de aprendizaje autónomo

ESCUELA SECUNDARIA ORCHARD MESA
CAFETERÍA
2736 C ROAD

LUNES, ENERO 22 A LAS 4:30 P.M.
MARTES, ENERO 23 A LAS 6:00 P.M.

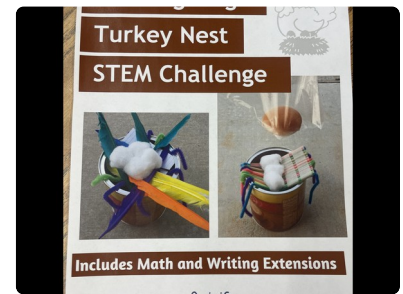
El Programa Challenge, ahora en la Escuela Secundaria Orchard Mesa, es un programa de todo el distrito para estudiantes de secundaria académicamente dotados. Después de brindar una descripción general del programa, los estudiantes y el personal estarán disponibles para preguntas.

Padres traigan a sus estudiantes con ustedes.

Las solicitudes estarán disponibles a partir del 22 de enero y se aceptarán hasta las 4:00 p.m. el 26 de febrero de 2024.

PARA MAS INFORMACION: contactese con Tina Sleigh at tina.sleigh@d51schools.org con sus preguntas.
[La Pagina Web de el Programa Challenge](#)

Submitted by Kristi Beale, GT Teacher at Pomona and Shelledy Elementary



Pomona students have been using the **Engineering Design Process** in full force this quarter! We had two STEM CHALLENGES that required understanding of the 4 C's - **C**ommunication, **C**ollaboration, **C**ritical Thinking and **C**reativity . The first one named MONSTER GENETICS happened during the week of Halloween when students learned about the science and probability of genetic features, and flipped a coin to see which attributes had a higher likelihood of being on their "monster" they were building.

The week before Thanksgiving Break we jumped into a TURKEY NEST STEM CHALLENGE. They learned about turkey nests and how to build the most shock-absorbent ones for dropping a raw egg onto them. This task used a lot of trial and error and redesigning and rebuilding. The record height of successfully dropping an egg into the nest without it bouncing or rolling out, (and of course without cracking it) was an amazing 7 1/2 feet!

Good Job Pomona STEAM LAB!



2023 NAGC Conference

Submitted by Debbie Beth Hoffman, GT Teacher at OMMS



The annual conference for the National Association of Gifted Children was held in Orlando, Florida from November 9-12. One GT coach, 2 middle school GT teachers, 1 elementary GT teacher and 1 elementary classroom teacher made the trip to represent D51 and bring back information to share.

Fun facts: Over 3,000 people from around the United States attended
Nearly 200 classes were offered each day

Everyone commented that so much new information and strategies were presented that it will take time to implement them all, but a few are shared below.

Some quick shares:

Our 2nd grade classroom teacher came back and tried something called “What’s In the Box?” to develop questioning skills. She reported it to be a great success on her first try and super student engagement. Here’s how you can implement today:

- Get a box of any size
- Hide an object inside
- Ask your students to ask yes or no questions
 - Good questions narrow down the possibilities - Does it fill up the space in the box? Is it round? Is it lightweight?
 - Not helpful questions are just guesses (Is it a watermelon? - without having asked any questions to lead them to a reason it could be a watermelon)
- After a few questions as examples, encourage students to help others know if they are using good questioning strategies

One of the middle school GT teachers used a slide from one of the sessions to encourage students to work together to solve puzzle problems with the following strategy:

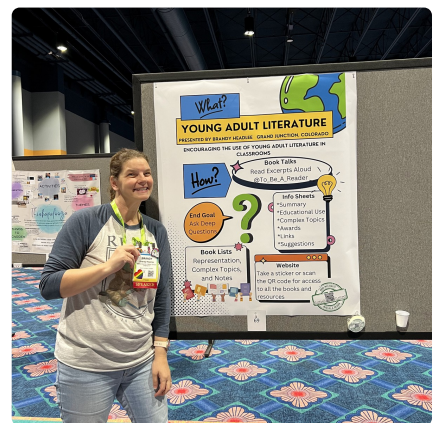
- See (What do you see?)
- Wonder (What does that make you wonder?)
- Pretend (Let’s pretend that’s true . . .) At middle school they should be able to recognize that this is Hypothesize
- Test (Does the idea work?)

Don’t be afraid to admit it doesn’t work and try again

The other middle school GT teacher was able to recognize something a classroom peer could use and shared immediately about the idea of adding art to poetry for a cultural piece, while also commenting that she got some good information on goal setting that she plans to use to update what she does with her students for their Advanced Learning Plans.

Our coach Brandy presented two different activities showing that not only do we bring information back but we share what we have with others.

Everyone who attended will be sharing more at the GT virtual mini-conference coming up in February so watch for more information.





The Cooke Foundation's Young Scholars Program

The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation's [Young Scholars Program](#) application will open on **February 8, 2024**. The Young Scholars Program is a selective five-year, pre-college scholarship for high-performing 7th grade students with financial need. It provides academic advising, along with financial support for school, summer programs, internships, and other learning enrichment opportunities.



Eligible applicants should:

- Be current 7th graders and/or entering 8th grade in fall 2024.
- Have earned all As and Bs since the beginning of 6th grade.
- Reside in the U.S. and plan to attend high school in the U.S.
- Demonstrate financial need with a maximum adjusted gross income of \$95,000.

To receive updates about the program, [click here](#).



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 Westslope Parents of Gifted & Talented and 2E kids.

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



Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS



**DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF,
JUST NAIL THE BIG STUFF.**

What's another teeny, tiny stain? You've got more important things to think about—like making sure your kids are buckled correctly in the right seat for their age and size.

Check at [NHTSA.gov/TheRightSeat](https://www.nhtsa.gov/TheRightSeat)



This event is not sponsored by or endorsed by District 51 and the District assumes no responsibility for the conduct or safety during the event. In consideration for the privilege to distribute this information/hold this event, the organization shall defend, indemnify and hold District 51 harmless from any and all claims, injuries, damages, losses or suites, including attorney fees, arising out of or in connection with this event, except for injuries and damages caused by the sole negligence of the district.

2023-2024
ANNUAL HOLIDAY 3 vs 3
BASKETBALL
TOURNAMENT



WHO: Boys and Girls Currently in Grades 5 - 8
WHAT: 3 vs 3 Tournament
WHEN: December 30th, 2023
TIME: Games begin at 1 pm*
WHERE: Central High School
COST: \$25 per player

Cost includes free admission to an upcoming CHS Basketball game

Register online by clicking on this link or scan the QR code
<https://forms.gle/WdyrdDTuqrCPe6ja8>

*Start and end times for games are subject to the number of teams registered

15 minute games

3 game guarantee (Format will depend on number of teams at each grade level)

Teams must register a minimum of 4 boys

Each player must register by clicking on the provided link or scan the QR code by Tuesday December 26, 2023

Don't have a team
- Register as an individual (teams will be created by attendance area if possible)

This is a fundraising event for Central High School Boys Basketball

QUESTIONS: CONTACT JOHN SIDANICZ

EMAIL: sidsid@d51schools.org

PHONE NUMBER: 970-589-2720

Facebook: "CHS Future Warrior Basketball"

X(Twitter): @chsbball2023

FUTURE WARRIOR BASKETBALL WEBSITE:
<https://forms.gle/WdyrdDTuqrCPe6ja8>



Need help
affording
health
insurance?

If your employer doesn't offer health insurance, or if you can't afford their coverage, we can help.

We help you apply for financial assistance to lower the monthly cost of health insurance

Get assistance navigating the online enrollment process, compare coverage options side-by-side, and learn if you qualify for a discount based on income - all in one day!

Monthly premiums starting from \$0 and copays from \$2

Our friendly staff make the application process fast and easy

Call (970) 244-0850 or visit hilltopshealthaccess.org

Hilltop's*Health Access
Local answers you can trust



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.



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



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Colorado West
Performing Arts Company

presents

M LITTLE MERMAID

the historic
AVALON THEATRE
February 23 & 25

15% OFF
TICKETS
CODE:
Peachjar15



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Sponsored in part by Ellis CPA



Colorado West Performing Arts Company
Western CO's Premier Ballet Company
presents

15% OFF
TICKETS
use code:
Peachjar15

THE NUTCRACKER

DEC 16th-23rd
at CMU's Robinson Theatre



For Reserved Seating & Ticket Info
coloradowestpac.org // (970) 314-2226

Brought to you in part by these fine sponsors



SCAN TO PURCHASE TICKETS









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*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/

Get more information on your options:



hfcgo.com/options

KeepCOCovered.com

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

Attendance Matters

D51

Presence is Power.

When kids are in school they...



Build Self Esteem



Reach Goals



Make Friends

Every Minute. Every Hour. Every day.

You might believe that kids missing a day of school occasionally isn't significant... yet, those instances add up over time!

When a student misses **2** days a month:

- ★ They miss **20 DAYS** of school a year
- ★ They miss **20 HOURS** of math in a year
- ★ They miss **30 HOURS** of reading & writing a year
- ★ They miss **OVER 1 YEAR** of school by graduation

We want students to succeed. We need them at school.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS.

CAGT Happenings



*Conversations
with CAGT*

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 programs premier 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 past videos anytime!

Conversations with CAGT is an incredible opportunity to get expert advice on topics regarding giftedness for FREE with time to ask your questions. Questions from CAGT members get priority!

Join us on the **first and third Tuesdays of the month** at 5:00 pm MST on Facebook Live!

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Rocky Mountain PBS Kids



Helpful Holiday Tasks That Kids Can Do

Any grown-up who has watched an episode of “Curious George” can recognize that much of George’s mischief stems from misguided helpfulness. After all, he’s a curious little monkey who just wants to lend a hand, but when he tries, things start to go a bit haywire! Sound familiar?



These are concepts both parents and kids can relate to. Although it can be tempting to stay in control and do everything ourselves, teaching kids how to do things themselves has major benefits for the whole family. Sharing responsibilities with your kids gives them a step toward independence, a sense of pride and accomplishment, and – with the right jobs – can take some things off your plate!

This holiday season, try giving some of the tasks below to the children in your family, or brainstorm ways you can break down bigger jobs into smaller, achievable chores for them.

Holiday Chores for Ages 2 to 3

For toddlers and early preschoolers, helping is more about joining in the family culture of working together than anything else. Littles ones see grown-ups and older siblings pitching in, and they want to have jobs they can do, too!

- Put cozy throw blankets in a basket
- Pick out a holiday book to read together
- Help with baking holiday treats by putting ingredients into a bowl
- Collect recycling and trash after unwrapping gifts

Holiday Chores for Ages 3 to 4

Preschoolers are growing their independence and can take on age-appropriate jobs without as much supervision as toddlers. That said, 3- and 4-year-old children are still learning how to be careful, so choose the objects they’re working with thoughtfully. Stick to accessible tasks that are at their level and a match for their motor skills.

- Assemble a basket, tray, or shelf of holiday books
- Make and hang winter and holiday decorations, such as [cotton swab snowflakes](#) or [thumbprint holiday lights](#)
- Hang ornaments or decorations on a tree, mantel, or other easy to reach spots
- Sweep up before or after a holiday meal
- Help with baking holiday treats by decorating cookies
- Recycle holiday catalogues
- Stick bows on presents

Holiday Chores for Ages 4 to 6

Attending school helps kids hone their fine motor skills and ability to follow multi-step directions. If your child already does some chores at home, it’s easy to translate them into holiday versions!

- Hang up holiday dish towels and hand towels
- Make a paper [garland](#)
- Throw away broken ornaments and decorations
- Sort unused toys to donate
- Open and display holiday cards
- Put (unlit) candles in a [menorah](#) or [kinara](#)
- Hang Christmas stockings (on existing hooks or stocking holders)

- Collect pinecones or other natural items for decorating
- “Wrap” gifts with gift bags and tissue paper
- Set the holiday table
- Clear the table after a meal

Holiday Chores for Ages 6 to 9

As empathy continues to develop for this age group, they’re able to better reflect on others’ wants and needs. Try giving them jobs they can fully “own” and complete in one block of time. Or, cultivate their big kid status by assigning them recurring tasks for which they’re responsible.

- Untangle garlands or shorter strings of holiday lights
- Make or help to make a signature family dish for the holiday meal
- Stuff, seal, and stamp holiday cards
- Pack up cookies for friends and neighbors
- Make handmade gifts for teachers or family
- Think about ways to give back to the community
- Fill out gift tags
- Create place cards for the holiday table

Do you think your kids are ready to take on some of these responsibilities? What holiday tasks would you add to this list?

Author:

Catie Parrish

D51 Gifted & Talented Department



**2768 Compass Drive, Suite 200
Grand Junction, CO 81506**

Bill Larsen - Interim D51 GT Director

Brandy Headlee - D51 GT Coach

Summer Allen - D51 GT Administrative Assistant

(970) 254-6903

Summer.Allen@D51Schools.org



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