August 14, 2012 

Elementary and Intermediate (3-8) GT Program 2012-13 Over View

The Gifted and Talented Program is like an enchanted garden, where lovely, unique flowers and trees are the students, the parents are the sunshine, classroom teachers are the oxygen, and I'm the rain that sprinkles on them to help them grow and blossom. Every element is of equal importance. If one element were lacking, the trees, flowers and plants would whither away until replenished.    We all work together to make picture perfect experiences and mind expanding explorations, so that the garden thrives on.

  Mrs. K. Stevens

Greetings Parents & Teachers,

**One of my goals this year, is to be a better communicator with both parents and teachers, my partners! I plan to do this through a monthly news letter that will keep you posted on up coming events and topics of study. Parents can expect to receive this GT news letter at the beginning of each month via your gifted child. I am also working on a new and improved “weebly” GT web site that should be ready soon. The web site will have a link to the news letter as well as many pictures of events and activities the GT students participated in last year and I will post new photo’s as the year progresses. I’m planning to host another open house, at the elementary school, in the GT classroom, on August 14th during which I’ll be asking that you GT parents leave me your email address, for another means of contact (that for me is better than the phone because I check my email throughout each day but only check phone messages once pr. day during the school year).**

A second goal I have for this year is to incorporate more of the national common core state standards into lessons (which I began last year but plan to further implement this year). The adoption of these national standards by our state is wonderful news for our GT kids. Common core state standards (CCSS) focus more heavily on higher order thinking skills (which is right up their ally) and they focus on college readiness skills such as more writing, use of sources, and persuasive writing. We will still do many artistic and affective activities like last year. We’ll just include more challenging writing tasks with each activity, rather than just allowing them to respond through a poem or a riddle as was the routine practice for last years class work. Additionally, just as CCSS focuses on a good deal of informational text, we shall too. I noted last year that the vast majority of our students favor informative text, so this will be a great fit. I also wanted to note that I do my best to always plan and keep GT work fun, exciting, challenging, and in class. In other words I do my best to not assign homework because they already have a big workload and I don’t want the fact that they are gifted, to be viewed as a punishment. However, I plan to assign (just) two large research projects (one will be for the first semester, the other will be in the second semester) that will necessitate work at home in order to complete (like the Solar System Paper or Intermediate level Renaissance Project last year). The rest of our writing projects will be confined to in-class work. Many g.t. Students told me on their survey, that they enjoyed these larger projects more than anything else we did. So I am very happy to accommodate! On a related note, the survey results for both g.t. Students and parents were super positive and encouraging. For that, I thank you and want you to know your input is highly valued and desired.

Thirdly, I plan to be more actively involved in both OM practice and Quiz Bowl, as I am almost finished with my masters degree in Gifted Talented and Creative (conclude by Dec.). Thus I have a little more time to assist with facilitating these worthwhile after school activities. If you are a returning parent volunteer for OM or Quiz Bowl, May God richly bless you! Santa may have to make a special trip to visit you this year. Additionally, there are several chess playing teams in our area. If I could get a volunteer to assist (who knows the game of chess), we could get a team going.

Lastly, I just wanted to close by saying a great big thank you for your help and support last year and relay my heart felt appreciation for all you do to support our gifted kids.

Sincerely,

Trumann Public Schools, GT Coordinator/Facilitator

