



Anderson School Newsletter

A publication of the Anderson School for the Gifted & Talented
14900 White Settlement Road, Fort Worth, Texas 76108

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Telephone (817) 448-8484

A MESSAGE FROM DR. & MRS. ANDERSON

Gifted and talented children are significantly different from others. And they frequently find themselves to be a casualty of the conflicts that naturally result from interactions between typical school settings and the characteristics they exhibit.

Schools often attempt to mold and shape gifted children as if all children were alike. The curriculum and the learning environment are structured in ways that inevitably force gifted children to be in conflict with their age peers and with the school community on what may become a day-to-day basis.

To complicate matters, there are more ways in which gifted children differ from other children, than ways in which they resemble each other. And the more highly gifted children are, the more they differ in relation to age peers.

Recognition and acceptance of their individual differences is the greatest good we can do for them. But acceptance implies accommodation - providing an educational alternative to traditional schooling that simply may not offer viable solutions to meeting special needs. The mere survival of children condemned to an environment of neglect can eventually develop into a crisis of concern for their parents.

But just think of the boundless potential for gifted children who can not only survive the toxic philosophical elixir of the equal treatment of unequals, but who

can blossom under the tutelage of other gifted individuals, who can grow to love learning for its own sake and eventually become self-directed, autonomous learners, who can learn to love themselves and to love and accept all others, who can come to fully realize that the time we have on this earth is truly the greatest gift we have and who can envision the infinite opportunities this magnificent country offers each citizen with the courage to sail against the wind and the vision to know wherever life leads us, we have the strength and the faith in ourselves not only to survive, but to prevail.

- I always felt the true textbook for a pupil is the teacher. -
(Mahatma Gandhi)

HOLIDAYS TO REMEMBER

NOV. 13-15 Inservice: N.A.G.C.
NOV. 20-22 Inservice: T.A.G.T.
NOV. 27-29 Thanksgiving
DEC. 23-JAN.3 Christmas
JAN. 6 Preparation Day
JAN. 20 M. L. King Day
FEB. 17 President's Day
Mar. 17-21 Spring Break
Mar. 28 Good Friday

- Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one. -
(Malcom Forbes)

STUDY TRIPS ABOUND

Anderson scholars have again set a busy agenda for community resource utilization with a goal of one study trip each week. This semester we received a special tour of the Naval Air Station (Carswell), Fort Worth Star

Telegram plant and the Pate Museum of Transportation. We also attended a Kids Who Care production of Romeo and Juliet at the Scott Theater and will see The Snow Queen in November, The Best Christmas Pageant Ever in December and West Side Story in February.

Other destinations this semester include the C. R. Smith Museum of Aviation, the Museum of Science and History, the Omni Theater, and the Last Supper exhibit. Later, we will travel to Austin to observe the Texas legislature in action.

- Genius begins great works;
labor alone finishes them.-
(J. Joubert)

HOW WE DIFFER FROM OTHER SCHOOLS [PART 2]

In structuring our school philosophy we decided to eradicate every barrier to the accessing of knowledge by children, who, by their nature, come through us intrinsically motivated. We held nothing found in the present structure of education as sacred and wanted to begin anew by looking at learning through the fresh, untired eyes of our own very young children.

In so doing, we were confronted with many seemingly simplistic questions that begged to be addressed. What was it that infatuated a young child with the discovery of something new or caused countless hours to be spent tinkering with seemingly worthless objects or studying the structure of simple things with such inquisitiveness?

- The two hardest things to handle in life are failure and success. -

HOW WE DIFFER, cont'd

Why did our children see such beauty in the things we could no longer recognize as such? What was it that caused us to reject the notion that schooling was exciting, fun and adventuresome? Why did we lose sight of the idealism of our youth? And why were our very first experiences in school such a joy to anticipate and remember and the last years so difficult to survive and so easy to forget? What happened to us, or perhaps, who happened to us? And what did they do or forget to do with us or for us?

Eventually we resigned ourselves to the harsh truth that somewhere between first grade and the end of high school, they simply forgot us. The teachers and administrators of our last years in school were so narrowly focused upon what they were teaching and assumed so much about us, that we were lost in the eclectic and egalitarian fads and fancies of the day.

Grades became objects of reverence and the solid Gospel of our discontent. Reputations were built upon them and futures foretold, regardless of their lack of validity. Age mates were cast into roles that demanded conformity, competition on uneven playing fields, uniformity, and boredom and nausea. Outdated traditions and customs with regard to sorting, selecting and doing unto students abounded. The emphasis was everywhere, but upon us.

So this was the point at which we began - with our children and with what was left of the child in us. If we could be relive childhood, what now would we want our schooling to be like?

The startling rediscovery of the joy we found in our youth led us to conclude that it was the one, essential, fundamental, naturally occurring thing that, over time, had eroded and dissolved, as other things took precedence

over our lives. The perfunctory acquisition of facts became such a pressing issue, that our innate love of learning vanished. We found that living and learning became isolated, separate entities even though they were inseparable in childhood.

Learning occurred quite naturally in our early years, as we proceeded to learn for living rather than live for learning. Our teachers instinctively knew that happy children were always learning because they were naturally excited about coming to school and eagerly anticipated every day. Learning was the natural by-product of joyful living. It fit together with the laughter, the love and the life we enjoyed like the pieces of a beautiful mosaic.

In our youth, the emphasis was always upon us as children and not upon the school, the grades, the rules, the teacher, the team, the textbook or the time. Time that became the clock on the wall which enslaved every edict, enfolded us into the linear walled-in spaces called classrooms, encircled our few priorities, and eradicated our few precious moments of childhood.

And so, we concluded that the focus of the Anderson School is NOT to be upon learning but upon joyful living. And that learning was to remain a natural by-product of a beautiful experience.

- God gives every bird its food, but He does not throw it into the nest. -
(J.G. Holland)

"BUNS" THE RABBIT IS OFFICIALLY ENROLLED

A friendly (and famous) world traveling bunny has now been enrolled at the Anderson School. He was qualified by virtue of his talent (he is already potty trained), notoriety and his persistent pleading.

Buns, as he is wont to be called, was a gift of Dr. Joe Bean. He now roams freely among the other scholars in class, allowing them to discortate and tactically

engage (pet) him [upon completion of their assignments, of course].

His chief goal is to become a truly autonomous learner - studying subjects such as multiplication and subtraction (which must naturally follow multiplication - if the rabbit population is to kept in check).

He freely admits to wasting time in front of the TV and prefers watching Bugs Bunny. His favorite movies include Harvey and Escape from the Planet of the Rabbits.

- We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit. -

(Aristotle)

Fort Worth Theater Willie Award Nominees are announced

Alex Anderson was recently nominated for his performance as the Farmer Menschen in The Wizard of Oz, produced at the W. E. Scott Theater. Alex is a very active nine year old who has been previously nominated for a Willie Award for his performance as Dan Gilbreth in Cheaper by the Dozen. Mrs. Anderson was also nominated for her role as Dahlia Cruz in Our Lady of the Tortilla, produced by the Fort Worth Theater.

- It's a funny thing about life; if you refuse to accept anything but the best, you very often get it. -
(Somerset Maugham)

CAMPUS VISITATIONS

Parents interested in visiting the Anderson School for the Gifted and Talented are encouraged to call (Mrs.) LeVonna Anderson at (817) 448-8484 to make an appointment. Tours of the campus are provided on one day of each month - usually on a Sunday afternoon. You are encouraged to bring your child(ren) with you.

- We must view young people not as empty bottles to be filled, but as candles to be lit. -

(Robert Shaffer)