

## **Mrs. Stinnette: Gifted Instructor for Goodview, Stewartville and Montvale Elementary Schools**

[jstinnette@bedford.k12.va.us](mailto:jstinnette@bedford.k12.va.us)

**What is the Gifted Education Program?** The Gifted Education Program provides academic services for students in kindergarten through grade twelve. It follows the guidelines found in the Virginia Plan for the Education of the Gifted and the Virginia Standards of Quality. It is designed to address individual learning styles, needs, and interests that encourage each student to develop to his or her greatest potential.

**How are students identified as gifted?** Referrals are accepted throughout the school year and may be made by a teacher, principal, parent, or community member. A student's name should be given to the child's classroom teacher, a resource teacher for gifted education, school counselor, or principal. The parent will be contacted by the resource teacher for gifted education to discuss the student's academic profile. Students may be referred as early as kindergarten through grade twelve. All eligible students are identified with four components: grades from the previous semester, the teacher's recommendation, an achievement test such as the Stanford 10 Achievement Test, and an ability test such as the Otis Lenon School Ability Test. The School Consultation Team (SCT) reviews the information and eligibility is determined.

**What are the areas of identification?** Students are identified as General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA). Students are served according to their individual academic strengths in the core areas.

**How are identified students served?** The program is one of academic need, and parent permission is required for student participation to begin. A Gifted Education Plan (GEP) is developed annually and outlines the needed instruction. Primary service emphasizes a differentiated curriculum which may be provided by flexible and cluster grouping of students, pull-out classes with resource teachers for gifted education, extended classes, advanced placement classes, and/or special programs. Students are challenged with instructional strategies that focus on academic development, creativity, and higher-level thinking skills.

**How can parents become involved in the Gifted Education Program?**

Parents are encouraged to participate in the Gifted Education Program. In addition, parents are represented by the Local Parent Advisory Committee, which is comprised of parents from each school, school personnel, community members, and school board

representatives. This committee represents the families of identified students and works to improve the program.

**Why is testing needed?** Each spring, all students in the second grade in Bedford County Public Schools take the Stanford 10 Achievement Test and the Otis Lenon School Ability Test (OLSAT). The test scores provide valuable information to educators. They help determine if students are working towards their potential. They assist in identifying students who may be at risk for school failure. The scores may also be used for determining if a student should be referred for gifted education services.

**What is the Stanford 10 Achievement Test?** This national, multiple choice test measures what a student has learned. Students are tested in Reading, Language, Math, and Science. The scores are “normed”. This means that students in the same **grade** are compared nationally and ranked according to their performance. The test is based on national standards rather than the Virginia Standards of Learning.

**What is the Otis Lenon School Ability Test?** This national, multiple choice test measures a student’s ability to reason and solve unknown problems. Students are tested on their “Verbal” and “Nonverbal” skills. The verbal section is made up of exercises that deal with language. The nonverbal section is made up of exercises related to numbers, patterns, and puzzles. The scores are “normed”. This means that students who are the same **age** are compared nationally and ranked according to how they performed.

#### Help to Prepare Your Child for Testing

You can help by making sure he or she:

- gets plenty of sleep the night before the tests.
- has breakfast on the morning of the tests.
- knows that you think he or she will do well on the tests.
- arrives to school on time and with a positive attitude.

After the tests:

- talk with your child about what was learned from the tests.
- ask if he or she would do anything differently if the tests could be retaken.