



Bayside Tri-Campus

# Gifted Gazette

Gifted Resource Teachers:

Mrs. Dawn Winn-Sawyer, Ms. Debbie Given,  
and Mrs. Marie Madel

**Diamond Springs,**  
Mrs. S. Lewis-Principal  
**Newtown Elementary,**  
Ms. L. Chatman-Principal  
**Williams Elementary,**  
Mr. G. MacKay-Principal

Fall, 2009

## Emerging Scholars Initiative at the Tri-Campus~

We are excited to once again have the **Emerging Scholars Initiative (ESI)** at the Bayside Tri-Campus. This is a program that is available in Title I schools in Virginia Beach and the goal of the program is to identify children with high academic potential and to nurture this potential so that the students will be prepared to engage in challenging subject matter in upper elementary school and beyond. In this program the gifted resource teachers (GRTs) work with all of the kindergarten and first grade teachers to provide differentiated instruction. The GRTs visit every kindergarten and first grade classroom on a weekly basis to provide whole group lessons that focus on higher-level thinking. During these lessons, teachers are “kid-watching” or looking for things that the children do or say while engaged in the activities. These anecdotal records are used to help teachers identify students who display higher-level thinking and to differentiate the curriculum to meet their needs.

Kindergarten and first grade teachers also receive training quarterly by the GRTs to better serve the needs of our high-end learners. Topics for this year’s training include: Promoting Inquiry in Science, Math, and Social Studies and Using Concept Maps with Young Children.

**SAPLINGS—Students and Parents Learn Intellectual Growth Strategies:** As an ESI school, we are fortunate to have an opportunity to visit the Chrysler Museum of Art. On Saturday, January 9th, we will take 50 of our first graders and their parents to the museum. While there, the students will work with docents, and the parents will participate in activities that will help their children do better in school. Before leaving the museum, children and parents will be able to tour the galleries while practicing the COW-LICKS strategies together. Information will be coming home at a later date. This is a very popular trip, so if you are interested, be sure to get your forms in early!

### **Anecdotal Records in Kindergarten and First Grade Classes**

This year at Diamond Springs Elementary School, the kindergarten and first grade teachers, as well as the gifted resource teachers, will be “kid watching”. This is the process of taking notes, or anecdotal records, on what your child does and/or says during various learning opportunities that reflect higher level thinking. We teach lessons that focus on higher level thinking activities such as critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, questioning, and logical thinking. Students are encouraged to share their strategies and thought processes while the adults in the room write their responses. These anecdotal record sheets are important because they provide the teachers with opportunities to see where instruction can be differentiated and made more challenging for students who need those opportunities. In addition, these notes are very important for those students that will be referred for gifted testing in first grade because they become one of many pieces of information gathered about the child that is shared at the identification and placement committee meeting. If you are the parent of a kindergarten or first grade student, you are also encouraged to keep your own notes on things that your child says and does that are unusual or show thinking beyond what a kindergarten or first grader would do.

Special points of interest:

- ♦ *Emerging Scholars Initiative*
- ♦ *SAPLINGS*
- ♦ *Anecdotal Records*

### **Important Dates**

**January 9**—1st Grade SAPLINGS trip to the Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk

**January 12 & 13**—Gifted Screening for ALL first graders

**February 16**—School Information Night at Old Donation Center for 1st grade students

**March 1**—Deadline for paperwork for 1st graders being referred for gifted testing

**April 20 & 21**—Testing of referred 1st grade students



"The more that you read, the more things you will know.

The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

*I Can Read with my Eyes Shut*

Dr. Seuss



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Dear Parents of Kindergarten and First Grade Students,

Mrs. Winn-Sawyer, Ms. Given and Mrs. Madel are pleased to be working with all kindergarten and first grade students in the gifted resource program at Diamond Springs Elementary School. We will be meeting with your child's kindergarten or first grade class each week. Lessons will focus on problem solving, creative, logical, and critical thinking, as well as questioning skills. Our objective is to work closely with your child's teacher to provide and help them design lessons that require higher-level thinking.

We look forward to working in your child's kindergarten or first grade classroom this year. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

*Dawn Winn-Sawyer*

*Debbie Given*

*Marie Madel*

Mrs. Dawn Winn

Ms. Debbie Given

Mrs. Marie Madel

Gifted Resource Teachers for Diamond Springs Elementary