

# Voices from Michigan: A Gifted/Talented Primer

## Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education 2009 Spring Conferences



**April 24 and April 27, 2009**

Dear Friend of Gifted Education:

There are some pretty exciting things happening right here in Michigan that you may not know about! Our spring conferences focus on a team from an innovative public school program for academically talented children in grades three through eight and a therapist who specializes in gifted and talented children and their families.

This is your chance to know more about what to expect if you have a gifted child in your home or classroom. What works, and why? You choose which session suits you best in the morning and afternoon. You can choose to spend the whole day looking at giftedness in general and how schools can respond or to spend a half day on that and your other half day considering some of the quirky ways that giftedness may be manifested.

Do you wonder how to find out if a child is really gifted? Have you been told a child has ADD, but that just doesn't seem right? Does your school say there is no way to afford any classes for kids who already know what is being taught? When are what the kids are doing (or not doing) just a "phase" and when should you get some additional help?

Bring your questions and join us in Grand Rapids or Howell for a stimulating day with others who know the joy and frustration of nurturing a gifted child.

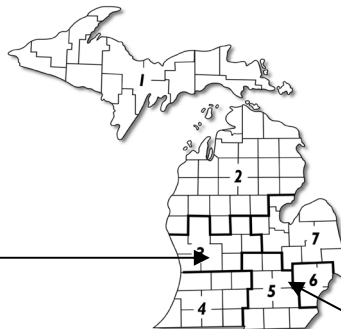
0.6 SB-CEUs available for the full day conference.

**Target Audience:** K-12 teachers, counselors, building administrators, curriculum directors, and parents.

**Identical presentations will be offered in two locations—you decide whether the Grand Rapids site or the Howell site is closer to home or works better for your calendar:**

**In Grand Rapids:**  
**Friday, April 24, 2009**  
**8:30 am - 4:15 pm**

Site: **Kent ISD**  
**2930 Knapp Street, NE**  
**Grand Rapids, MI 49525**  
**[www.kentisd.org](http://www.kentisd.org)**



**In Howell:**  
**Monday, April 27, 2009**  
**8:30 am - 4:15 pm**

Site: **Livingston ESA**  
**1425 W. Grand River Avenue**  
**Howell, MI 48843**  
**[www.lesa.k12.mi.us](http://www.lesa.k12.mi.us)**

## Schedule of Events

8:00 - 8:30 am Registration

8:30 - 8:45 am Overview of Program

8:45 - noon\* **Morning Breakout A: “Gifted Education: The Basics”**



*Presented by Mary Molyneux and the Kentwood Public Schools PEAKS (Parents, Educators, & Kids = Success) Program team. Mary is in her thirtieth year of teaching with 20 of those in gifted education. She has an M.A. in Elementary Education and an M.A. in Gifted Education. She is the creator and director of the PEAKS program for Kentwood Public Schools, an all-inclusive gifted program, grades 3-8. Mary teaches in grades 5 and 6 Language Arts, both elementary and middle school, and she is Gifted and Talented Coordinator for Kentwood. The PEAKS team includes Joe Westra who has ten years of teaching experience, all at the secondary/middle school level. Joe has an M.A. in Social Studies and an M.A. in Administration and has been with the PEAKS team for three years. Becky Brown is in her thirty-first year of teaching and has been with the PEAKS team for seven years. Eric Closson is in his fourth year of teaching and his first in the PEAKS program. He is working on his M.A. in Administration.*

The morning session will be a gifted/talented primer. This workshop is aimed at parents and teachers who have not had a lot of formal training about giftedness, and will address such basic issues as what is “gifted,” the characteristics of gifted young children and adolescents, the difference between bright learners and gifted learners, spotting gifted learners at home and in the classroom, underachievement, culturally diverse gifted students, and a basic overview of best practices, with lots of time for questions from the audience. The Kentwood PEAKS team will also offer strategies and techniques they have used in the classroom and for parents at home.

or

**Morning Breakout B: “Gifted and ‘Quirky’ Children”**

*Presented by Kim Waters, M.S., a limited licensed psychologist specializing in the treatment of a variety of challenges facing children, adults, and families in her practice, Exceptional Strategies, in Livonia. She has over 18 years of experience in the fields of child development, parenting, and behavior management with an expertise in gifted individuals. She has additional experience in sensory processing disorder and other developmental disorders. Kim is the acting chair of the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education’s committee on the social-emotional needs of the gifted and regularly presents workshops for parents and professionals.*

Do you know a bright, inquisitive child who is just a little “quirky” — intense, highly emotional, empathic? A bright child who covers her ears at any loud noise, a gifted writer whose penmanship cannot be read, a bright child who is distracted by sock seams and clothing tags, a bright child who will not try new foods? Kim will discuss Sensory Processing Dysfunction and other common emotional and behavioral issues seen in gifted children and provide strategies to help meet the social emotional needs of all gifted children. She’ll also discuss the common misdiagnoses and dual-diagnoses of gifted students, exploring frequent referral problems for gifted children. The complexities of twice-exceptional students, those who are both gifted and have learning differences, will also be explored. Diagnoses to be covered include Anxiety Disorders, ADHD, Asperger’s Syndrome, Bipolar Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

Noon - 1:00 pm Lunch

1:00 - 4:15 pm\* **Afternoon Breakout A: “PEAKS: One District’s Gifted Programming Model”**

*Presented by Mary Molyneux and the Kentwood PEAKS team.*

The afternoon session will introduce the Kentwood Public Schools all-inclusive gifted program, PEAKS (Parents, Educators, & Kids = Success), share the components of the program, and provide details on how to put together an all-inclusive gifted program or a pull-out. PEAKS offers an option for academically talented students who prefer an alternative to the traditional learning environment. The elementary program has been in existence for 15 years and the middle school program is in its second year.

or

**Afternoon Breakout B: “Gifted and ‘Quirky’ Children”**

*Presented by Kim Waters. A repeat of her morning session. See description above.*

\* Each breakout will have one 15-minute break.

**2009 Spring Conferences Registration Form**  
(Use one form per registrant - duplicate as needed)

Name (Print Clearly): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Daytime Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent  Educator  (School District: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_)  
 College student/student teacher (college/university \_\_\_\_\_)  
 \*Please deduct \$10 off the appropriate fee below

	Member		Non-Member		Total
	Before April 15	After April 15	Before April 15	After April 15	
<b>GRAND RAPIDS LOCATION</b> April 24, 2009 – Full Day (includes lunch)	\$ 30	\$ 40	\$ 45	\$ 55	
<b>HOWELL LOCATION</b> April 27, 2009 – Full Day (includes lunch)	\$ 30	\$ 40	\$ 45	\$ 55	
<b>ALLIANCE DONATION</b> (your tax-deductible donation supports efforts on behalf of the gifted)					
<b>MEMBERSHIP DUES</b> (Please complete Membership Application below)					
<b>TOTAL DUE</b>					

\* Group pre-registration rate: deduct \$5 per person. To qualify, three or more registrations must be submitted together. Please enclose a separate registration showing AM or PM or Full Day selection for each registrant.

Personal Check # \_\_\_\_\_  School District Check # \_\_\_\_\_  
 VISA or  MASTERCARD or  DISCOVER – Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of credit card holder (Print Clearly) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of credit card holder \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to: Sue Belaski, Executive Secretary, Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education, 5355 Northland Drive, N.E., Ste. C-188, Grand Rapids, MI 49525; Phone: (616) 365-8230; Fax (616) 364-1114; Email: sbelaski@comcast.net**

**General Information**

- ◆ Persons who register by April 15, 2009, are eligible for discounted “early bird” rates.
- ◆ **Current Members** are those who hold a membership in the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education which runs through April 2009, as well as new or renewing members who pay their membership dues with their conference registration.
- ◆ If you are not a current member, join now and receive *Images*, the quarterly Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education newsletter, discounted Alliance events, and much more, plus providing support for state advocacy for the gifted learner. You will find a membership form on the last page of this brochure.
- ◆ Group pre-registration rate available: deduct \$5 per person. To qualify, three or more registrations must be submitted together. Please enclose a separate registration for each registrant.
- ◆ Reduced conference registration rate available for college student/teacher candidates. Please deduct \$10 from fees listed above and indicate your college/university above.
- ◆ Limited financial assistance is available. Contact Alliance Executive Secretary by April 15, 2009, to apply.
- ◆ No refunds will be issued unless a written request is received by April 15, 2009. Refunds, less a \$20 processing fee, will be issued two weeks after the spring conference.
- ◆ **0.6 SB-CEUs available for this full-day conference.**
- ◆ Look for most current conference information on the Alliance website, [www.migiftedchild.org](http://www.migiftedchild.org).

# Membership Form



I would like to join the Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education as an:

- Individual member** - open to any individual interested in furthering the goals of the Alliance. Yearly Dues: \$30.00
- Institutional member** - open to any organization or institution interested in furthering the goals of the Alliance. *Institutional membership entitles the organization or institution to designate four individuals as members of the Alliance.* Yearly Dues: \$100.00
- Affiliate member** - Name of my Affiliate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Yearly Dues: \$20.00
- Donation to the Michigan Alliance \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(The Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, tax-exempt organization.)
- New    Renewal    Student    Teacher    Parent    Administrator    Other

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Referred by \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education.  
Mail to: Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education, 5355 Northland Drive, Ste. C188, Grand Rapids, MI 49525

*One Size Does Not Fit All ~  
Meet the Needs of the Gifted Child*



Michigan Alliance for Gifted Education  
5355 Northland Drive, NE, Suite C-188  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525-1043