

## Memorandum

TO: All Interested Parents, Teachers and Board Members  
FROM: Carol Moran, Enrichment Specialist  
RE: Invitation to Organize an Enrichment Cluster

As you may know, the Enrichment Team and (\_\_\_\_\_) School are organizing a series of enrichment clusters. We hope you will be interested in submitting an idea for an enrichment cluster which will include multi-aged groups of students who share a common interest with the person organizing the cluster. The main rationale for participation in a cluster is that students and presenters want to be there. Students will select one cluster which they will attend beginning with a three session pilot series to be scheduled before the holidays. After the pilot, a longer series of Enrichment Clusters will be organized beginning in January. Selection of an enrichment cluster will not be a random or spontaneous process. Interest assessment procedures, examples of previous positive involvement in curricular or nonschool activities, and highly positive reactions to selected interest development activities may be used to help young people make decisions about which enrichment cluster they might like to select for given periods of time.

Enrichment clusters are organized around major disciplines, interdisciplinary themes, or cross-disciplinary topics (e.g., an electronic music group or a theatrical/television production group that includes actors, writers, technical specialists, costume designers). Enrichment Clusters will be connected in various ways to the regular curriculum already offered. Remember, you don't have to be the "expert" in this. You and your students can learn more about the topic together as you consider the type of cluster you might organize.

Sample descriptions of enrichment clusters are provided on this page and the next page to help you decide the type of cluster you might like to organize. Your own description may be very different from these samples.

We hope the descriptions below will help guide you in your organization of an enrichment cluster. If you are interested (and available) to organize an enrichment cluster, please complete the enclosed form. We hope you'll join us in this exciting opportunity for our students. Thanks!

## Sample Clusters

### *WHALES AND WAVES*

Welcome to the world of the humpback whale. Join us as we set sail on a scientific expedition to learn more about this endangered animal. We will learn some navigation skills, sailing techniques, and survival skills as we become shipwrecked on a deserted island and visit the windiest place on earth. We will discover how scientists explore the natural world as we visit with them at work.

### *CHEMISTRY*

This class will provide students with the opportunity to study solids, liquids, and gases. They will conduct test experiments on dissolved oxygen chlorides, chlorine, and iron. They will learn about the physical and chemical properties of water. They will develop an understanding of acids, alkalines, and pH gases, and will have experience with chemical testing of rocks, minerals, and gasses.

*(continued on next page)*

Reis, S. M., Gentry, M., & Park, S. (1995). *Extending the pedagogy of gifted education to all students* (Research Monograph 95118). Storrs, CT: The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, University of Connecticut.

### ***VIDEO PRODUCTION***

Lights! Camera! Action! What happens behind the scenes of movies and T.V. shows we watch? This course offers an opportunity to learn the basics of film and video production through hands-on activities from script writing to producing a video program. We will enhance our writing, speaking, and acting skills, and also learn the technical skills of the studio equipment.

### ***MYTHS AND LEGENDS***

In this enrichment course, we will sample the myths and legends that people have told to entertain themselves, to explain mysteries of nature, or to honor their heroes and heroines. While reading these stories, we will focus on the cultural similarities and differences of the people of the world and our ancestors. We will write myths, legends, and sometimes perform skits.

### ***COMPUTER PUBLISHING***

Students will learn the proper method of keyboarding. They will also learn word processing skills through the writing of articles for the school newspaper. (Students will increase their awareness of current events, news, and newspapers.) An issue of a school newspaper may be published by the class.

### ***MATH DISCOVERIES***

Math Discoveries will encourage, enhance, and expand our mathematics experiences through large group sessions, small group activities, games, and stations. Enrichment activities are provided to learn problem-solving skills in estimating, graphing, geometry, and logic. Many activities are done in cooperative groups.

### ***ARTISTS AND IMAGINATION***

What's your favorite method of creating art? Who's your favorite artist? Let's learn about artists whose style and techniques have made them famous. Then, using your own interpretations, create a work of art, experimenting with various methods and materials.

### ***PAINTING AND DRAWING***

We will expand students' drawing and painting knowledge and skills using realistic images and imaginations while working in a variety of mediums. Students will be exposed to several artists' works from various cultures.

### ***CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY***

We will become familiar with the principles of construction technology through experimentation. Paper structures such as towers will be built to demonstrate constructive applications and space relations. Bridge construction, using other mediums, will be studied and students will build their own bridge structures.

### ***YOUNG INVENTORS' FAIR***

The process of invention is taught as a vehicle for expressing creativity which is both satisfying to the student and beneficial to society. Students, with the help of parents and their teacher, will create an invention individually or with a partner. The final product may be entered at the Young Inventors' Fair.

### ***GOVERNMENT AND THE LAW***

Government and the Law is designed for upper elementary students. The children are given the opportunity to express their individual views on "law and order" through various activities such as role-playing, skits (on vandalism, shoplifting, employee theft, buying stolen goods), discussions, and writing projects. All students learn about the three main branches of the government and why we have each of them. They identify their state senators and representatives and, after discussing pertinent issues, write to their legislators. The course's culmination is a mock court trial.

## Community Members: Share Your Talent With Local Students

- **Work with small groups of children**
- **Choose a personal interest or skill to share**
- **Team up with a friend**
- **Gain community exposure**

**What:** Enrichment Cluster Program

**Who:** Small groups, grades K-5

**When:** 1 1/2 hour/week, January through March '95

**Where:** School

We are interested in providing authentic enrichment experiences for local students. A recent interest survey shows that these students want and need art experiences.

This program is one component of Renzulli's Schoolwide Enrichment Model. It is offered through the Gifted and Talented department at UConn.

### **Topics Most Needed:**

- Inventions/Technology
- Dinosaurs & Fossils
- Animal Behavior
- Astrology
- Mineralogy
- Art Projects
- Cartoons
- Dance/Music
- Magic
- Math Games
- Chemistry
- Toy Construction
- Holidays

**Deadline:** Dec. 21st

**Questions?**

**Need an Idea?**

**Interested in signing up?**

**For more information**

Call Carol Moran to sign up to facilitate your own Enrichment Cluster.

# **E** nrichmen **T** **CLUSTER** – Response Form –

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Proposed Cluster \_\_\_\_\_

Description of proposed Enrichment Cluster (2-4 sentences)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Brief biography of Enrichment Cluster teacher for inclusion in brochure (1-2 sentences)

---

---

---

---

Age level of students preferred for Enrichment Cluster \_\_\_\_\_

Minimum number of students needed in the Enrichment Cluster \_\_\_\_\_

Maximum number of students needed in the Enrichment Cluster \_\_\_\_\_