Erik Francis began his keynote this morning with some background on how he realized the importance of good questions. As a teacher, he invested time learning material and sharing it with his students, and was frustrated that he still wasn’t engaging all of his students. He knew he was a strong speaker, but his students would just repeat exactly what he had told them. When he turned it around and started asking better questions, students did more thinking and began to create their own understanding.

Next, Erik encouraged us to take out our smartphones. He reminded us that they are a tool for instruction. Answers are free, and our job is to help students think critically about and continue to question the information they find so easily. Creating questions is also easy, but creating good questions is trickier. Erik took us through the process of creating excellent questions in history and literature. We started with a simple Google search for “Who was the first president of the United States?” There were laughs from the audience, as most of us felt like this was something we didn’t even need to look up! After he told us to scroll down on the results, we learned that even this simple fact is not as clear cut as we believed. There were eight presidents under the Articles of Confederation before George Washington. Erik used this information to show us how to create questions from a social studies standard about the Articles. We also learned about other kinds of questions that support the target question of a unit; including hypothetical, affective, and situation based questions. He urged us to always have students choose a personal question of interest related to each topic that they will teach to the class, and he always allows, “Why do I need to learn this?”.

As he wrapped up, Erik reminded us that good questions accomplish several goals. They should stimulate deeper thinking, deepen knowledge and understanding, pique curiosity and imagination, and help students learn to express their thinking more effectively. Don’t let standardized testing steal our thunder. We are artists and architects, and it is is our job to make these kinds of questions. As we guide our students on the path of developing their gifts into talents, there is only one of Gagne’s catalysts we can impact. We must create an environment of engagement and enthusiasm through our questions. Now we know -- and knowing is half the battle!
Who's on Deck?

Lunchtime Roundtable Discussions
12:15-1:00 P.M. in the Rome Commons Dining Hall

Talk about Odyssey of the Mind with Sharon Cernogorsky.

Tomorrow's topic is enrichment clusters with Nicole Waicunas.

Wednesday Morning's Keynote:
Diversity Panel

Freddie DeJesus, Marcia Gentry, Gilman Whiting, Del Siegle, Joe Renzulli, and Erik Hines

GRADUATE COURSES INFORMATION MEETING
Wednesday at 5:30 P.M. in WSRH 112

Come hear about how you can join an exceptional group of educators from all over the world to pursue graduate level coursework. Information about the Three Summers Graduate Program, online graduate courses, and the online Master's degree will be shared.
Monday Opening Keynote Continued: Reflections and Introduction -- Sally Reis

Sally Reis began by discussing the Confratute “brand”. What do we want to be known for doing well? What defines us as educators? It is the creativity our students share that makes a difference. Students who get to be creative producers in school often grow up to become creative producers in life. Schools should be places for talent development. We should be proud of standing for creativity and talent development. When teachers use enrichment based, differentiated instruction, we see higher levels of engagement. Not only are children engaged, but they make continuous progress. This produces consistently higher achievement scores for all students. Schools should be places that combat boredom.

The Confratute brand believes in engagement and enthusiasm as a key to learning. Schools should be places for talent development. All students should feel excited and enthusiastic about learning. We believe in differentiation that compacts instruction and allows students to avoid repetition of content they have already mastered. Giving them the opportunity to move to new material gives them the chance to experience challenges and learn how to handle difficulty early in their educational career. We can even reverse underachievement through choice, engagement, and joyful learning.

Go home with new expertise that will allow you to create your own brand in helping students love learning. This week you should shop around and identify the components and resources you can take home with you. Become a pioneer for your district or school. Make learning engaging; not just for your students, but for teachers and administrators as well. Creativity and talent development are key to the future of our world in all areas of human endeavor. What will you do to reignite the flame of engagement and enthusiasm in the hearts of your students?

Social Event:

Disco Night Featuring Mysterious “Wapatooli” from the Bayou

8:30 - 10:00 PM
Rome Patio

Calling all performers- beginners and “pros” alike! Sign up to perform a 2-5 minute individual or group skit, dance, and more for the Variety Show on Thursday, July 13th, at 8:30 P.M. in VDM. Sign up by 5:30 P.M. on Wednesday. You must attend one rehearsal on either Monday from 3:45-5:15, Tuesday from 3:45-6:00 P.M., or Wednesday from 3:45-6:00 P.M. in VDM.
Save the Date: CreativityCon, October 26, 2018
Keynote Speaker - Kathryn Haydon, Award-Winning Educator, Author and Founder of Sparkitivity

Backed by the science of creativity, Kathryn Haydon will speak about nurturing creative thinking strengths from cradle through career. Beyond fleeting inspiration, be prepared for a highly interactive keynote that sparks fun, inspires, and gives educators actionable tools and strategies to bring back to integrate creativity into their academic content and classrooms.
Potential presenters are welcome to fill out this RFP at [https://goo.gl/forms/NnVMfTP8bmCQf4lq2](https://goo.gl/forms/NnVMfTP8bmCQf4lq2)

Registration will open August 1, 2018. For more information see [www.ctgifted.org](http://www.ctgifted.org) or email info@ctgifted.org

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**SEEKING:**

We are a team of three teachers in a self-contained program for gifted students in grades 3-6. We would love to connect with others in a similar program to swap ideas!
-- Terri Longin  tlongin@portangelesschools.org

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**NOW RECRUITING GRADE 3 TEACHERS!**

Teachers have the opportunity to implement an innovative grade 3 math unit and attend collaborative professional development!

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**Thinking Like Mathematicians**

Challenging All Grade 3 Students

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**Stop by Confratute's Command Central**

Mon-Thurs 12pm-1:30pm

for more information about getting involved!

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**CALLING ALL K-12 TEACHERS!**

We want to learn about the characteristics and behaviors of twice-exceptional students!

Help us refine questions about teacher’s beliefs on twice-exceptional students by taking a brief survey.

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**Refer to the Information Sheet in your Confratute packet for details!**