Addressing Low Motivation
in Your Students

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Think of an underachiever
POTENTIAL

PERFORMANCE
Endepohls-Ulpe and Ruf (2006) found gifted underachievers, children with low achievement motivation, and gifted girls were at higher risk to be overlooked as gifted. Therefore, they were less likely to develop fully their talents...
## Predicted probability of being identified as gifted in grade 4 for students from different demographic groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Under/FRL</td>
<td>4.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Under/EL</td>
<td>7.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Under/FRL/EL</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under</td>
<td>5.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under/FRL</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under/EL</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under/FRL/EL</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Probability of identification as gifted in grade 4 for reference students and students who are EL, FRL, and UNDER after controlling for Reading and Math scores and school SES and school percentage of gifted students.

Points above the Mean in both reading and mathematics; $SD$ is approximately 9.5 points.

The National Center for Research on Gifted Education (NCRGE – http://ncrge.uconn.edu) is funded by the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education PR/Award # R305C140018.
What is the relationship between the % of free and reduced lunch students in a school and the % of students identified as gifted?

-.61
Reasons
Sample

- 212 primarily middle school students identified as gifted underachievers (9- to 17-years-old).
- 94% of sample between 10- to 15-years old, $M = 12$-years-old.
- Approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of sample were male; $\frac{1}{4}$ were female.
- 74% Caucasian, 13% Latino, 4% African-American, and 2.5% Native American.
- IQ scores ($n = 121$); $M = 131.8$, $SD = 9.2$. 
• ADHD-IV Rating Scale (Home Version)
• Two 9-item subscales:
  – Inattention
    • e.g. “Has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities.”
  – Hyperactivity/Impulsivity
    • e.g. “Interrupts or intrudes on others.”
• Reliability estimates:
  – Inattention alpha = .93
  – Hyperactivity/Impulsivity alpha = .89
Instrumentation

- ADHD-IV Rating Scale (School Version)
- Two 9-item subscales:
  - Inattention
    - e.g. “Does not seem to listen when spoken to directly.”
  - Hyperactivity/Impulsivity
    - e.g. “Blurts out answers before questions have been completed.”
- Reliability Estimates:
  - Inattention \( \alpha = .88 \)
  - Hyperactivity/Impulsivity \( \alpha = .91 \)
### ADHD IV Home Rating Scales- Parent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>% in GUA Sample</th>
<th>% in Norm Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inattentive</td>
<td>23.13</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyperactive</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined</td>
<td>6.72</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall prevalence</td>
<td>29.85</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ADHD IV School Rating Scales- Teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>% in GUA Sample</th>
<th>% in Norm Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inattentive</td>
<td>39.62</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyperactive</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined</td>
<td>9.43</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall prevalence</td>
<td>50.94</td>
<td>21.6</td>
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</table>
Grades Matter
In the largest longitudinal study of underachievers conducted to date, McCall, Evahn, and Kratzer (1992) found that 13 years after high school, the educational and occupational status of high school underachievers paralleled their grades in high school, rather than their abilities.
Fong, Snyder, Barr, and Patall (2014) examined the effectiveness of interventions to reverse underachievement. Their meta-analysis of 53 research studies suggested that interventions moderately improved achievement and psychological function. Interventions were most effective in elementary and middle school settings. 

The most successful interventions for improving achievement focused on instilling a value for learning.
How do instill a value for learning
Achievement Orientation Model
Del Siegle and D. Betsy McCoach
Neag School of Education
University of Connecticut

Possesses Adequate Skills to Perform the Task

Values the Task or Outcome (Goal Valuation)

Confident in One’s Ability to Perform the Task (Self-Efficacy)

Expects to Succeed (Environmental Perceptions)

Sets Realistic Expectations and Implements Appropriate Strategies to Successfully Complete Goals (Self-Regulation)

Teachers + Peers + Family = Task Engagement and Achievement
How do we convince students that they can be part of the game?

What do we do about students with great potential who do not value developing their talent?

What are the implications of recognizing students’ talent on their self-efficacy?
What are the implications of recognizing students’ talent on their self-efficacy?

How do we convince students that they can be part of the game?

What do we do about students with great potential who do not value developing their talent?
Maladaptive Competence Beliefs Pathway

1) identity tied to their gifted label and
2) identity tied to easy early achievement

...so self-handicap to protect their gifted identity.
Maladaptive Competence Beliefs Pathway
1) identity tied to their gifted label and
2) identity tied to easy early achievement …so self-handicap to protect their gifted identity.

Declining Value Beliefs Pathway
1) insufficient challenge in school work and
2) fail to see value in academic work …so don’t connect effort and positive outcomes 

(Snyder & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2013)
Recognize students’ giftedness and their contribution to its growth.
Francoys Gagné

Joseph Renzulli
Carol Dweck

*Entity (Fixed Mindset)*

*Incremental (Growth Mindset)*
Use *Specific, Developmental* Compliments

- “Nice work.”
- “You’ve learned to write supporting sentences in a paragraph that elaborate on the topic sentence.”
In gifted education, we have a difficulty balancing act recognizing...
Children need encouragement. So if a kid gets an answer right, tell him it was a lucky guess. That way, he develops a good, lucky feeling.
Unfortunately...many young people believe making mistakes means they are not smart and that having to work hard also means they are not smart.
“Mistakes are the portals of discovery.”

- James Joyce
Share stories of setbacks and accomplishments
Discuss How the Brain Works
Create time capsules with short and long term aspirations.
Share Your Objectives

• Begin lessons by listing and discussing the skills that students have mastered from previous lessons.
• Post the goals (skills) students will learn during a new lesson.
• Check off goals as the lesson progresses.
• At the end of a lesson, review the goals (skills) which were achieved. Provide students time to reflect on what they learned.
TIP

Avoid Unnecessary Assistance
How do we convince students that they can be part of the game?

What do we do about students with great potential who do not value developing their talent?

What are the implications of recognizing students’ talent on their self-efficacy?
Learn what is meaningful to students
Personally Meaningful

- Tied to Student’s Identity
- Personally Interesting to the Student
- Integral to Student’s Vision of the Future
- Viewed as Useful

Connected to Prior Knowledge and Present Experiences

Eccles and Wigfield
Never underestimate the power of student interest in making learning meaningful.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Talent Area</th>
<th>Entity Belief</th>
<th>Role of Ability</th>
<th>Role of Effort</th>
<th>Personal Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Musical Skills</td>
<td>-0.093</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.36**</td>
<td>0.601*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Skills</td>
<td>-0.123</td>
<td>-0.053</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.629**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematical Skills</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.263**</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.550**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Athletic Skills</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.124</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>0.726**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Skills</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.259**</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.598**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spelling Skills</td>
<td>-0.052</td>
<td>0.162</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.350**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dance Skills</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.18*</td>
<td>0.691**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inter-Personal Skills</td>
<td>-0.191*</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.453**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logical/Reasoning Skills</td>
<td>-0.052</td>
<td>0.26**</td>
<td>-0.069</td>
<td>0.514**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual/Spatial Skills</td>
<td>-0.126</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.513**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language Acquisition Skills</td>
<td>-0.029</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.496**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Skills</td>
<td>-0.034</td>
<td>0.237**</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.485**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Skills</td>
<td>-0.185*</td>
<td>0.186*</td>
<td>0.213*</td>
<td>0.613**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Skills</td>
<td>-0.072</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.688**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Academic Skills</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.222**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The future influences the present as much as the past.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche
“I don’t want to be challenged. I want to be intellectually stimulated.”
Because content is academically challenging does not guarantee that students will find it intellectually stimulating. 

- Too little academic challenge, too little intellectual stimulation produces bored students.
- Too much academic challenge, too little intellectual stimulation produces “turned off” students.
- Too much academic challenge with adequate intellectual stimulation produces frustrated students.
- Optimal challenge combined with intellectual stimulation produces students in a state of “flow”.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi coined the term “flow”
Meaningfulness and the Roles of Teachers Change as Talent Develops

1. Teach them to love the field
2. Develop their skills and discipline
3. Help them to make a unique contribution

Benjamin Bloom
The Enrichment Triad Model

Type I
General Exploratory Activities

Type II
Group Training Activities

Type III
Individual & Small Group Investigations of Real Problems

Regular Classroom

Environment in General
What are the implications of recognizing students' talent on their self-efficacy?

What do we do about students with great potential who do not value developing their talent?

How do we convince students that they can be part of the game?
Create Supportive Environments
What gifted high school students seek include:

• control
• caring
• complexity
• challenge
• choices

(Kanevsky & Keighley, 2003).
Children's identification with a positive adult role model in their environment is based on three variables...

...nurturance, or the warmth of the relationship between the child and a particular adult

...similarities that children see between themselves and the adult

...the power of the adult as perceived by the child

-- Silvia Rimm
What does being a knowledgeable teacher promote?

1. Self-efficacy to Learn
2. Differentiation of Content
3. Variety of Instructional Strategies
4. Interdisciplinary Connections Which Promote Meaningful Learning
Ansel Adams

"The perfect is the enemy of the good" - Voltaire
Happy Birthday
Support ACHIEVEMENT

Don’t Give Up…
All of Us Are Works in Progress
When placed in appropriate environments, all living things flourish.

- Del Siegle
“I am only one,  
But still I am one.  
I cannot do  
everything,  
but still  
I can do something;  
And because I cannot  
do everything  
I will not refuse to do  
the something  
that I can do.”

-- Edward E. Hale
The Underachieving Gifted Child
Recognizing, Understanding, & Reversing Underachievement

Prufrock Press