



BRUNSWICK SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

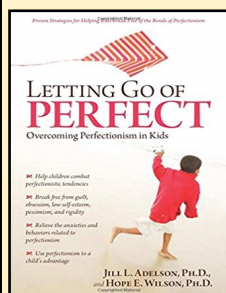
# Talent Development Newsletter

November 2019

## PERFECTIONISM

The BSD Talent Development Team hopes you find the writing and resources offered in this newsletter helpful as we support your child to find the right balance of achievement, personal success, growth, and happiness. A common theme we often see in our students is the self-imposed expectation that they be perfect in all they do. Many parents have shared their child's frustrations or stymied growth because of their child feeling "not good enough." Even though we know nothing is perfect, students are often inhibited to try because of the fear of failure. We share the information in this newsletter as a connection between home and school as we strive to have our work be a positive influence on your child's education.

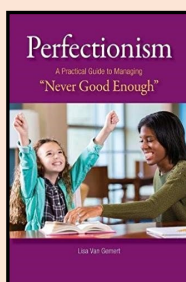
Do you know that Talent Development sponsors and facilitates many Professional Development (PD) opportunities for Brunswick School Department staff members? The PD sessions focus on various strategies that support differentiation for all students, but especially for students identified for Talent Development. Teachers appreciate the PD opportunities offered as we all support our students' academic growth and their habits of work.



One such Professional Development session offered to teachers was an afterschool book talk. Teachers joined the group for six sessions focused on the book titled *Letting Go of Perfect*. Teachers discussed the five types of perfectionism, as identified by the authors, and ways to nurture healthy

perfectionism in the classroom. There are also strategies for parents to help their child, and we recommend the book as a resource for home.

Another resource for parents in helping to manage their child's perfectionist mindset and other issues related to parenting is [Hoagies Gifted Education](#) website. This link will bring you to a book list for children of all ages that address perfectionism.



Along with offering BSD staff professional development opportunities, the TD strategists also gain inspiration and information from attending PD opportunities. Most recently, the **Maine Educators for the Gifted and Talented** offered a session on the topic "perfectionism" guided by presenter Tricia Robinson. Ms. Robinson recommended the book *Perfectionism*, by Lisa Van Gemert. One of the takeaways from this session about this topic is to have students self-reflect by practicing "predictions" such as asking themselves, "What's the worst thing that could happen? What's the best thing that could happen? What is most likely to actually happen?" We all have moments when these questions can help relieve the anxious feelings associated with our perfectionism.

If you are interested in learning more about the latest research on nurturing healthy perfectionism you may enjoy reading [Helpful Tips for Parents of Perfectionistic Gifted Learners by Susan Berry, Ph.D.](#) This link will bring you to the University of Connecticut website which is a great resource for other topics relevant to children identified for Talent Development.

Tips for parents and teachers from the article noted above:

- Watch for signs of unhealthy perfectionism and intervene if necessary
- Adults should be aware of their own predispositions toward compulsive excellence
- Refrain from setting high, non-negotiable standards
- Emphasize the effort and process, not the end result
- Do not withhold affection, support, or encouragement if goals are not met
- Teach your gifted child to manage perfectionistic behaviors and focus on positive self-talk