THE GRAYSON SCHOOL
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The Achievement-Orientation Model[1]

Del Siegle and Betsy McCoach, members of The Grayson Research Advisory Board (GRAB), have developed a model that explains what factors motivate students to achieve in school — and which factors, conversely, are either missing or underdeveloped in gifted underachievers:

> "Each of the four elements of the model (Meaningfulness, Self-Efficacy, Environmental Perception, and Self-Regulation) is usually present in individuals who achieve at a level commensurate with their abilities. Some of these factors may be stronger than others, but overall, achievement-oriented individuals display a combination of all four traits. Remediation can be based on diagnosing which element or elements are deficit and addressing them. Two individuals might have very different remediation programs based on their achievement-orientation profiles."[2]

1. Students must view the task as meaningful
(researchers call this "Task Valuation:" Why should I try? What makes it important?) The material must be:

- Tied to student's identity (I'm a "math kid," so this is "my thing");
- personally interesting to the student (I have never liked science classes);
- integral to student's vision of the future (I'm going to be an engineer, so I need to learn this stuff); and/or
- viewed as useful (when am I ever going to have to know how to calculate the surface area of a saddle??).

2. Students must trust that success is possible.
("Environmental Perceptions:" Can I learn here? Does anyone really care if I do well?)

- "My teacher doesn't like me."
- "It's too noisy in here to concentrate."
- "This stuff is too easy."

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[1] Del Siegle & D. Betsy McCoach from University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education outline this model in their book, *The Underachieving Gifted Child: Recognizing, Understanding, and Reversing Underachievement*, Prufrock Press, 2012.

[2] From Del Siegle's course, "Addressing Underachievement and Motivation in Gifted Students," at University of Connecticut's Confratute Program, July 2015 (PowerPoint presentation).

3. Students must believe they have the ability to do well.

("Self-Efficacy:" Am I really smart enough? Can I really do it? Why am I smart?)

Self-efficacy, or one's judgment about one's capability to perform a given activity, is based on:

- Mastery experience — student perceptions of how well they did a task are actually more important than objective results
- Vicarious experience — especially when a student has limited experience with a task
- Social persuasion — depending on others to provide meaningful, productive feedback on performance
- Emotional & physiological states

4. Students need to develop self-regulation strategies.

("Self-Regulation:" How do I put it all together? Do I know how to study? Do I know how to work hard?)

- *Management strategies* — time management and study skills
- *Personal standards* — comfort level with risk; "good enough" perfectionism
- *Self-monitoring* — distractibility; delayed gratification; performance avoidance