

# **Nature and Needs of Gifted Students**

**Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services  
Division of Public Schools  
Florida Department of Education  
2005**

This is one of five Gifted Endorsement Modules available through the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, Florida Department of Education, designed to assist school districts and state agencies which support education programs in the provision of special programs for exceptional students. For additional information on this publication contact the Clearinghouse Information Center, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, Division of Public Schools, Florida Department of Education, Room 638 Turlington Building, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400.

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**Gifted Endorsement Module**

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# **Nature and Needs of Gifted Students**

**Gifted Endorsement Module**

# Endorsement Courses for the Gifted Implementation Guidelines

## Introduction

This manual provides a guide for a gifted endorsement course. Included you will find suggested resources, a list of pre-requisite skills, objectives, components, activities and assignments.

It is understood that there will be flexibility in course formats (number of meetings, duration of each meeting) depending on the participants and nature of the instructional setting. The mastery must be equivalent to a 3-semester hour course in a university setting (16 weeks/3 hrs.). Each participant must show evidence of mastery which could be held as a portfolio for each course

The courses have been updated with two central concepts, Infusion and Modeling.

Infusion includes the following principles:

- Required skills as excellent general practitioners
- Diversity Issues
- Adult Education Principles
- Technology and Information Skills
- Differentiated Curriculum
- Appropriate Assessment
- Independent Learning and Research Skills

Modeling includes the following principles:

- Facilitative Practitioner
- Reflective Ongoing Self-Assessment
- Intake Interview: pre-assessment including knowledge base, skills, learning styles, interests, socio-cultural preferences
- Formative Evaluation
- Gifted Instructional Strategies: compacting, contracting, creative productivity

The facilitative Practitioner should use the following effective strategies:

- Process built into content
- Examination of current issues and key concepts
- Overview of multiple models
- Networking with other instructors
- Infusion of lower level thinking, focus on higher level thinking skills
- Interactive and open-ended
- Freedom of Choice: constructivism
- Flexible Structure: complexity, pacing
- Model effective strategies

Built into each of the courses are levels. The use of the pre-assessment is critical to the delivery of these modules. The levels are:

1. Pre-assessment
2. Base level: compacting and built in assessment in every module to facilitate acceleration
3. Curriculum extension/skill development for those who evidence mastery of some of the basic concepts at pre-assessment
4. Creative productivity for those evidencing a higher level of mastery

The outcomes of the modules are:

- Base level: content expertise for all participants
- Higher level: alternative outcomes for participants with some degree of mastery of the topics
- Professional development as an educator of gifted students
- Documentation of skill development (portfolio)
- Open-ended yet accountable evidence of mastery
- Continuity across the five courses

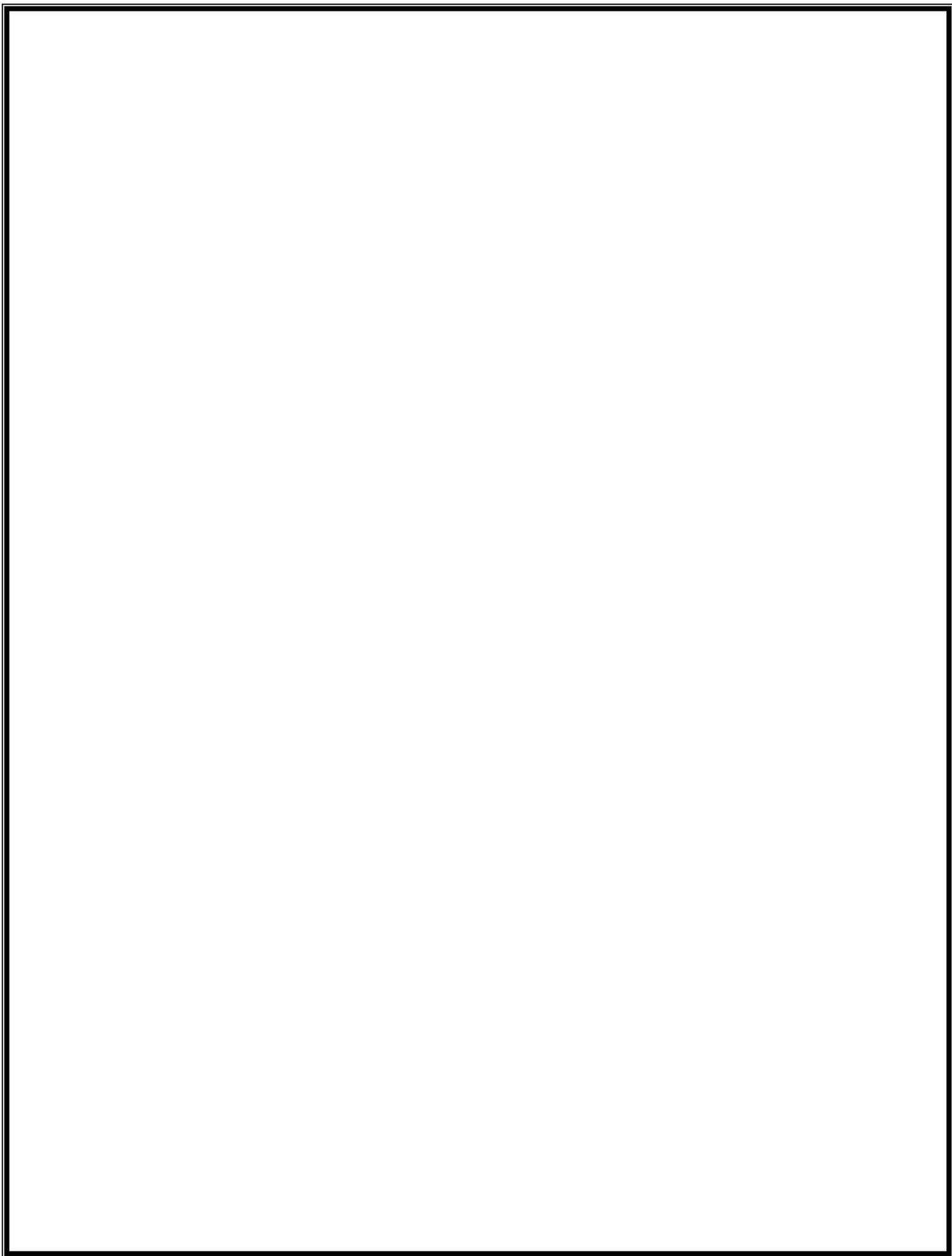
### **Instructors/facilitators**

Recommended qualifications for instructors/facilitators of the add-on endorsement classes are:

- a current Florida teaching certificate (or the equivalent) with gifted endorsement (or documented expertise in gifted education)
- a Master's Degree or higher
- a background of successful staff development and/or adult training expertise
- a minimum three years successful teaching experience in gifted education

### **Additional materials**

There are three additional documents included with these guidelines. The first is recommended resources and supplementary texts for the five endorsement courses. When an instructor is selected, the person should review these recommended resources for the courses and check web site addresses for accuracy. Also, included is a list of pre-requisites that prospective teachers enrolled in the endorsement courses should possess. The instructor may need to direct participants to other staff development offerings in lieu of trying to teach pre-requisites as part of the endorsement course. The third document outlines specific delivery strategies that should be used for gifted endorsement courses. The instructor should model these strategies throughout the implementation of the courses.



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## INTRODUCTION

*Nature and Needs of Students Who Are Gifted* provides an overview of the evolution of gifted education on the national, state, and local level. Major events affecting gifted education are described as well as major policies and procedures governing the delivery of gifted education. Cognitive, social, and emotional characteristics common to individuals who are gifted are identified along with strategies that can be used to meet the academic needs of different categories of students who are gifted.

It is intended that completing this module will help the participant develop an awareness of

- the teacher's role in the identification process
- the process and content of individual psychological testing in the identification of the gifted
- the roles and functions of various systems which support teachers working to meet the needs of children who are gifted
- the cognitive and affective characteristics of children who are gifted
- the basic issues involved with the planning, developing, and implementing of programs for children who are gifted.

The topics developed in *Nature and Needs of Students Who Are Gifted* address various objectives which attempt to answer four broad questions

- Who are they?
- How do you find them?
- Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?
- What else should you consider?

Each topic of the module is organized as follows:

Topic Title:	Offers a focal point for the session.
Key Question:	Provides a guide for inquiry within each topic.
Objectives:	Lists measurable outcomes that should result from the learning, with activities and readings for each topic.
Key Concepts:	Identifies key concepts of the topic.
Recommended Reading Assignment:	Provides a variety of reading materials for the topic, based on availability and the needs of the participants.

Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

Learning Options  
Activities:

Outlines multiple options from which the instructor may select to help participants accomplish topic outcomes.

Evidence of Mastery:

Provides multiple options used to assess participants mastery of topic outcomes.

Resources:

Lists additional resources that may be used to extend or augment the topic and may be of particular value to participants who desire to explore the topic in greater depth.

## Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 1	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
<p>Who are they?</p>	<p>Identify and describe cognitive and affective behaviors, which lead to referrals to screening and testing for giftedness.</p> <p>Identify characteristics of giftedness and discuss the needs and problems associated with these characteristics.</p> <p>Identify the role that creative thinking/process/products play in the identification of giftedness.</p>	<p>List characteristics/ behaviors associated with giftedness.</p> <p>Share with small group/combine list for sharing with entire group.</p> <p>Compare completed (participant) list with those of researchers, access ERIC Digests and web sites.</p> <p>Facilitate a panel discussion describing cognitive and affective behaviors.</p> <p>Develop a chart of characteristics and associated problems and share with faculty.</p> <p>Create a brochure to share with educators/parents portraying gifted characteristics and the role that creative thinking, process,</p>	<p>Completed list of characteristics/ behaviors associated with gifted</p> <p>Active participation in sharing process</p> <p>Active participation in sharing process</p> <p>Active participation in panel discussions and small group activities</p> <p>Completion and presentation of chart of characteristics/ problems</p> <p>Completion and presentation of brochure</p>	<p>Clark: <i>Growing Up Gifted</i></p> <p>ERIC Digest_#E476  <a href="http://ericec.org/digests/e476.html">http://ericec.org/digests/e476.html</a>  <a href="http://www.gifteddevelopment.com/Articles/Characteristics_Scale.htm">www.gifteddevelopment.com/Articles/Characteristics_Scale.htm</a></p> <p>ERIC Digest_#E527  <a href="http://ericec.org/digests/e527.html">http://ericec.org/digests/e527.html</a></p> <p>A Glossary of Gifted Education  <a href="http://members.aol.com/svennord/ed/giftedgloss">http://members.aol.com/svennord/ed/giftedgloss</a></p> <p>Perfectionism and the Highly Gifted Child  <a href="http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/perfect.htm">http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/perfect.htm</a></p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 1	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
		and products play in the identification process.		



### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 2	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
		<p>interview process for class use.</p> <p>Share your findings with a small group and prepare a list of common traits in each of the categories.</p> <p>Develop a newsletter concerning factors that a beginning teacher of the gifted will need to know about cultures and special populations. Also include any other information about family dynamics, curriculum, education, and early childhood development, and underachieving gifted that might be helpful for beginning teachers.</p>	<p>Active participation in sharing process and completion of list of traits.</p> <p>Completed newsletter</p>	

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 3	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
Who are they?	Demonstrate knowledge of normal and advanced (typical and atypical) child development.	<p>Compare/contrast “normal” and “gifted” children of same age referencing developmental areas such as academics, social, emotional, and physical. Create a T chart or develop Venn diagrams to depict these comparisons.</p> <p>Observe two children one “normal” and one “gifted.” Observe the academics, social, emotional, and physical development of these two children. Develop an observation matrix for use by class. Chart observations using class created matrix.</p>	<p>Completed T-chart or Venn diagram. Active participation in class discussion as it relates to findings</p> <p>Completed observation chart or matrix</p>	<p>“The Role of Managed Mental Health Care in Counseling Gifted Children and Families.” <i>Roeper Review</i>, Fall 2001.</p> <p>ERIC Digest #E489 <a href="http://ericec.org/digests/e489.html">http://ericec.org/digests/e489.html</a></p> <p>“The Parent’s Challenge” David C. Baird’s Gifted Children Web-site. <a href="http://www3.sympatico.ca/daba/gifted/parents.htm">http://www3.sympatico.ca/daba/gifted/parents.htm</a> <a href="http://www3.sympatico.ca/daba/gifted/who_aref.htm">http://www3.sympatico.ca/daba/gifted/who_aref.htm</a></p>

## Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 4	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
Who are they?	<p>Illustrate the relationship between high academic achievement and giftedness.</p> <p>Demonstrate understanding of the difference between potential vs. performance as it relates to giftedness.</p>	<p>Visit the website <a href="http://www.appliedmotivation.com/Readings.html">http://www.appliedmotivation.com/Readings.html</a> Locate articles of interest on achievement. Who would profit from these articles and why? Prepare a summary of article(s) and be prepared to share with group.</p> <p>Poll participants about articles they reviewed. Develop Jigsaw groups for sharing information found in articles. Share findings.</p> <p>Prepare a chart of different types of achievement, problems, and possible solutions or suggestions.</p> <p>Conduct a panel discussion focusing on potential vs. performance as it relates to giftedness.</p>	<p>Completed summary of article(s)</p> <p>Active participation in discussions related to findings</p> <p>Completed charts</p> <p>Active participation in panel discussion</p>	<p>Carol J. Mills and Linda F. Brody "Overlooked and Unchallenged." <i>Knowledge Quest</i></p> <p><a href="http://www.appliedmotivation.com/Readings.html">http://www.appliedmotivation.com/Readings.html</a></p> <p>Anna Marks, "Able Underachievers". <i>The British Journal of Educational Psychology</i>, Dec. 2001.</p> <p>"A Quiet Crisis in Educating Talented Students." <i>National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent</i>, October, 1993. <a href="http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part1.html">www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part1.html</a></p> <p>ERIC Digest E535. <a href="http://ericec.org/digests/e535.html">http://ericec.org/digests/e535.html</a></p> <p>GT-Nurturing Young Gifted Children <a href="http://ericec.org/faq/gt-nurt.html">http://ericec.org/faq/gt-nurt.html</a> (Behaviors parents notice)</p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 4	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 5	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
Who are they?	Compare and contrast the theories of intelligence that pertain to gifted education.	Choose one of the theorists of intelligence found at the Indiana web site. Read about this person to determine their theory about intelligence? Create PowerPoint presentations for group on the identified theory. Share and compare your theorist with others.	Completed Power Point presentation about the different theories and the theorists  Active participation in class discussions	ERIC 1985 Digest <a href="http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed262519.html">http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed262519.html</a>  Intelligence Theory and Testing <a href="http://www.indiana.edu/~intell/index2.html">http://www.indiana.edu/~intell/index2.html</a>

## Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 6	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
How do you find them?	Identify the incidence of identified gifted students at the local, state, and national levels. Discuss how the prevalence of gifted students varies based on various definitions of giftedness in terms of culture, socio-economic level, location, and other factors.	<p>Use DOE/LEA web sites to identify incidence of gifted students at the district level for home district and several neighboring districts as well as at the state level. Chart findings.</p> <p>Create a data spreadsheet comparing the incidence of gifted in districts throughout the state.</p> <p>Read articles (resources) and seek out incidence of identified gifted students at the state level for other states and include information in spreadsheet. Convert spreadsheet data into bar graph and use as basis of discussion.</p> <p>Facilitate Jigsaw discussion (as per</p>	<p>Completed chart of findings</p> <p>Completed spreadsheet and/or graphic representation of data</p> <p>Completed spreadsheet and/or graphic representation of data</p> <p>Active participation in jigsaw discussion</p>	<p><i>Part II The Current Status of Education for the Nation's Most Talented Students National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent</i> – October 1993  <a href="http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part2.html">http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part2.html</a></p> <p>State Policies Regarding Education of the Gifted as Reflected in Legislation and Regulation. Collaborative Research Study CRS93302 (abstract)  <a href="http://searcher.org/ericdb/E D379849.htm">http://searcher.org/ericdb/E D379849.htm</a></p> <p>Incidence of gifted:  <a href="http://www.firn.edu/doe/comhome/datapage.htm">http://www.firn.edu/doe/comhome/datapage.htm</a></p> <p>"Is Every Child Gifted?"  <i>Roepert Review</i>; June 1997; Vol 19 Issue 4; Mark Runco</p> <p>2002 LEA Profile  <a href="http://firn.edu/doe/commhome/datapage.htm">http://firn.edu/doe/commhome/datapage.htm</a></p> <p>ERIC Digest #E520  <a href="http://searcher.org/digests/">http://searcher.org/digests/</a></p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 6	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
		<p><b>Specific Delivery Strategies</b>) on articles and ERIC documents and create summaries as needed.</p> <p>Using the previously created incidence spreadsheet, facilitate a think/pair/share (TPS) discussion speculating on differences in identified incidence.</p> <p>Identify ethnic, racial, socio-economic breakdown of gifted population from current LEA profile. Create Excel type pie-charts of district data to profile ethnic, racial, socio-economic, Free-Reduced Lunch, breakdown of entire district student population.</p>	<p>and completed summaries</p> <p>Reporting out from TPS discussion</p> <p>Completed pie charts of profile information</p>	<p><a href="http://ed358676.html">ed358676.html</a></p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 7	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
<p>How do you find them?</p>	<p>Identify emerging national and state trends in the identification of students who may be gifted.</p>	<p>Assign readings and review of web-sites. Summarize findings.</p> <p>Facilitate Jigsaw discussions on readings.</p> <p>Provide opportunity for panel discussion of articles and readings.</p> <p>Complete <u>Major Historical Events Affecting Gifted Education</u> worksheet.</p> <p>Facilitate Jigsaw discussion on <u>State definitions for the gifted and talented revisited.</u></p> <p>Using chart paper and above article, re-create matrix depicting identification and definition practices for states to assist in internalization of material and concepts.</p>	<p>Completed summaries of readings and/or reviews</p> <p>Active participation in Jigsaw discussion</p> <p>Active participation in panel discussion</p> <p>Completed <u>Major Historical Events</u> worksheet</p> <p>Active participation in Jigsaw discussion on article</p> <p>Completed states' definition matrix</p>	<p>“GT Identification” (<i>updated September 1998</i>) <a href="http://ericec.org/faq/gt-idsch.html">http://ericec.org/faq/gt-idsch.html</a></p> <p><i>State Gifted Education Associations</i> <a href="http://www.nagc.org/Other/asociations.htm">http://www.nagc.org/Other/asociations.htm</a></p> <p>“Using Tests to Identify Gifted Students.” NAGC Position Paper; <a href="http://www.nagc.org/Policy/po spaper.html">http://www.nagc.org/Policy/po spaper.html</a></p> <p><i>Historical Perspective, Gifted Challenge Grant; Florida DOE</i></p> <p><i>Major Historical Events Affecting Gifted Education, Gifted Challenge Grant; Florida DOE worksheet</i></p> <p>“State definitions for the gifted and talented revisited.” <i>Exceptional Children</i>; Reston; Winter 2000; Kristen Stephens; Francis Karnes</p> <p>“Towards a New Paradigm for Identifying Talent Potential” <a href="http://searcheric.org/ERICDB/ED388020.HTM">http://searcheric.org/ERICDB/ED388020.HTM</a></p>

## Nature and Needs Matrix

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 8	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
How do you find them?	Describe traditional/alternative assessment instruments/techniques used to screen and identify students who are gifted. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of these instruments/techniques.	<p>Using the full Renzulli Scales battery, evaluate a student who exhibits gifted characteristics.</p> <p>Discuss the relative strengths and weakness of the Renzulli Scales.</p> <p>Consider group viewing of "Finding Forrester." Discuss reactions.</p> <p>Complete <i>The Gifted Student: Case Study for Plan A Student</i>.</p> <p>Complete the <i>Identification Simulation</i>.</p> <p>Facilitate a series of Jigsaw discussions on selected articles</p> <p>Create a mind-map to identify salient points of articles for discussion.</p>	<p>Completed Renzulli Scales</p> <p>Active participation in Renzulli Scales discussion</p> <p>Viewing and discussion of film</p> <p>Completed <i>Case Study for Plan A Student</i></p> <p>Completed <i>Identification Simulation</i></p> <p>Active participation in group discussions on articles</p> <p>Completed mind maps</p>	<p>"Will the real gifted student please stand up?" <i>Roeper Review</i>; Dec 1998; 21(2), p. 161; Barbara Fischetti, Karen Emanuelson; Ann Shames</p> <p>"Teacher Bias in Identifying Gifted and Talented Students." Teri Powell, Del Siegle; <a href="http://www.sp.uconn.edu/~nrcg/news/spring00/sprng005.html">http://www.sp.uconn.edu/~nrcg/news/spring00/sprng005.html</a></p> <p>"Family Influences on the Achievement of Economically Disadvantaged Students: Implications for Gifted Identification and Programming." Scott Hunsaker; Mary Frasier; et al; <a href="http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/hu nsfra2.html">http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/hu nsfra2.html</a></p> <p>"Examining Identification and Instruction Practices for Gifted and Talented Limited English Proficient Students." Andrea Bermudez; Steven Rakow; (abstract) <a href="http://SearchERIC.org/ericdb/E D360871.htm">http://SearchERIC.org/ericdb/E D360871.htm</a></p> <p>"An Analysis of Teacher Nominations and Student</p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 8	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
				<p>Performance in Gifted Programs,” <i>Gifted Child Quarterly</i>, 41(2); Spring 1997; Scott Hunsaker; Vernon Finley; Elaine Frank</p> <p>“Wherefore Art Thou, Multiple Intelligences? Alternative Assessments for Identifying Talent in Ethnically Diverse and Low Income Students.” <i>Gifted Child Quarterly</i>, 40(2), Spring 1996; Jonathan Plucker; Carolyn Callahan; Ellen Tomchin</p> <p>“ADHD and Children Who Are Gifted. “ ERIC EC Digest #E522; James Webb; Diane Latimer;  <a href="http://searcheric.org/digests/ed358673.html">http://searcheric.org/digests/ed358673.html</a></p> <p>“Alternative Assessment.” (May 2000).  <a href="http://ericec.org/faq/gt-altas.html">http://ericec.org/faq/gt-altas.html</a></p> <p>“Identifying Adolescents Using Personality Characteristics: Dabrowski’s Overexcitabilities.” <i>Roeper Review</i>; Hun 1997; 19(4);</p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 8	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
				Cheryl Ackerman; Leigh Paulus  <i>Case Study for Plan A Student simulation</i>

## Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 9	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
<p>How do you find them?</p>	<p>Explain the referral and identification process in your district. Consider the roles of students, parents, and school personnel.</p> <p>Define the criteria for gifted eligibility and placement.</p>	<p>Discuss implications of district referral and identification documents and cross reference them to the ERIC document. Consider use of T-chart.</p> <p>Cross-reference and discuss those district procedures that support the implementation of the State Rule for Gifted.</p> <p>Create a PowerPoint presentation composed of the salient points of the referral and identification process that could be used during a parent night at school.</p> <p>Facilitate a Jigsaw Discussion on the ERIC document.</p>	<p>Active participation in class discussion and/or completed T-chart</p> <p>Active participation in class discussion</p> <p>Completed PowerPoint presentation. Evaluate as per class-created criteria</p> <p>Active participation in class Jigsaw discussion</p>	<p><i>Florida Administrative Code</i> (F.A.C.) State Rule for Gifted as per Chapter 6A-6.03019 <a href="http://fac.dos.state.fl.us/faconline/chapter06.pdf">http://fac.dos.state.fl.us/faconline/chapter06.pdf</a> (pages 152-153)</p> <p>School District's <i>Special Policies and Procedures</i> as they relate to gifted.</p> <p>ERIC Document "Student Selection for Gifted/Talented Programs" (updated May 2000) <a href="http://ericec.org/faq/gt-idpar.html">http://ericec.org/faq/gt-idpar.html</a></p> <p>District's documents related to the gifted referral and identification process</p>

## Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 10	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
<p>How do you find them?</p>	<p>Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of labeling gifted students.</p>	<p>Facilitate group discussion of the two articles.</p> <p>Using chart paper or white board, brainstorm a list of advantages and disadvantages of labeling gifted students.</p> <p>Facilitate a discussion with gifted students regarding the advantages and disadvantages of being labeled. Alternative: Role-play gifted students discussing the advantages and disadvantages of being labeled.</p>	<p>Active participation in group discussion of articles</p> <p>Participation in the charting process for brainstormed list of advantages and disadvantages</p> <p>Active participation in discussions and/or role-play activity</p>	<p>“Gifted &amp; talented: Exploring the positive and negative aspects of labeling.” <i>Roeper Review</i>: Bloomfield Hills: Dec 1998; Patrice Moulton; Michael Moulton; Mark Housewright; Keith Bailey</p> <p>“An interview with... Maria Sapon-Shevin: Implications for students and teachers of labeling students as learning disabled/gifted.” <i>Intervention in School and Clinic</i>: Austin; Mar 1999; Chris Walther-Thomas; Mary Brownell</p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 11	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
How do you find them?	Discuss the relationship between gifted programming and identification criteria.	<p>Compare standards identified in both readings to local or district programming and identification practices. Summarize comparisons using a T-chart or Venn diagram.</p> <p>Facilitate a group discussion on relationship of district's identification procedures to NAGC criterion and to Texas State Plan.</p>	<p>Completed summary of comparisons with T-chart or Venn diagrams</p> <p>Participation in group discussion</p>	<p>"Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Student Identification" from NAGC site:  <a href="http://www.nagc.org/table7.htm">http://www.nagc.org/table7.htm</a></p> <p><i>Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students</i>  <a href="http://www.swopnet.com/ed/TEA/Tx_State_Plan.html">http://www.swopnet.com/ed/TEA/Tx_State_Plan.html</a></p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 12	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
<p>Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?</p>	<p>Describe how gifted services differ from general education services with regard to curriculum, instruction, assessment, conceptual orientation, grouping and environment.</p>	<p>Invite the district gifted coordinator to address participants on elements of differentiation.</p> <p>Facilitate Jigsaw discussion for each of the major elements of differentiation: acceleration, complexity, depth, novelty, intensity/idealism.</p> <p>Invite “gifted adult” to discuss their school experiences.</p> <p>Observe and record an experienced teacher of the gifted using class created observation sheets.</p> <p>Review 13 Principles of Differentiation (Clark, p.449) and relate/ summarize rationale for these principles to the characteristics generally exhibited by gifted students.</p>	<p>Active participation in discussion with coordinator</p> <p>Participation in Jigsaw discussions</p> <p>Active participation in discussion with guest.</p> <p>Completed record of observation of teacher</p> <p>Completed summary of rationale</p>	<p>Sunshine State Standards  <a href="http://www.firn.edu/doe/menu/sss.htm">http://www.firn.edu/doe/menu/sss.htm</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.nagc.org">www.nagc.org</a></p> <p>ERIC Digest #E536  <a href="http://ericec.org/digests/e536.html">http://ericec.org/digests/e536.html</a></p> <p>“Ability Grouping: Geared for the Gifted” by Ellen Fledler, Richard E. Lange and Susan Winebrenner, <i>Roper Review</i>, January 1994</p> <p>ERIC Digest #E510  <a href="http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed342175.html">http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed342175.html</a></p> <p>ERIC Digest #E538  <a href="http://ericec.org/digests/e538.html">http://ericec.org/digests/e538.html</a></p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 12	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
		<p>Facilitate Jigsaw discussions on ERIC Digests.</p> <p>Host a panel discussion among participants on "Questions Often Asked" Clark pp 492-493.</p> <p>Update an existing unit or lesson incorporating elements of differentiation.</p> <p><i>Inservice Plan</i> Develop a program to present to other adults (parents, teachers, administrators, school board members, etc) that helps increase awareness of the unique needs of gifted students and their need for appropriate programming. Include a program outline, timeframe, related handouts/overheads, description of</p>	<p>Participation in Jigsaw discussions</p> <p>Active participation in panel discussions</p> <p>Completed unit or lesson</p> <p>Completed program or presentation of Inservice Plan to include salient points and elements of program</p>	

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 12	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
		activities, and a resource list.		

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 13	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
<p>Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?</p>	<p>Describe different types of service delivery models for gifted programs.</p> <p>Discuss the relationship of the level of need to placement in a continuum of services</p>	<p>Conduct a Socratic seminar on strengths and weaknesses of service delivery models. Create a T-chart of results.</p> <p>Create an “Advocate Fair” based on the pyramid on Clark p.256. Assign a “box” to participants, providing each a one-minute opportunity to advocate for their service delivery model.</p> <p>Role-play a discussion between a basic education classroom teacher and a teacher of the gifted related to rationale each see for placing gifted students in their classroom.</p> <p>Create a chart displaying the continuum of services appropriate for gifted students.</p>	<p>Completed T-chart of strengths and weaknesses</p> <p>Active participation in Advocate Fair</p> <p>Participation in role-play activities</p> <p>Completed chart of continuum of services</p>	<p>“From Gifted Education to Programming for the Talent Development.” Treffinger, Phi Delta Kappan, Bloomington, 79(10), June 1998</p> <p>“Is gifted education still viable?” <a href="http://www.edweek.org">www.edweek.org</a></p> <p>“The WOGI Project: Types of Delivery Models” Compendium 2000-2001: Continuum of Services</p> <p>National Research Center for the Gifted and Talented: Research Should Inform Practice <a href="http://www.msdk12.or.us/tagweb/giftedstandards.htm">http://www.msdk12.or.us/tagweb/giftedstandards.htm</a></p> <p>ERIC Digest #E513 <a href="http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed352774.html">http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed352774.html</a></p> <p>ERIC Digest #E464 <a href="http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed314916.html">http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed314916.html</a></p> <p>NAGC Gifted Education</p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 13	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
		<p>Brainstorm a list of strengths and weaknesses inherent in each of the service delivery models.</p> <p>Program visit. Arrange to visit a program that serves gifted students: for example, an International Baccalaureate Program, a visual and performing arts magnet school, or a class for underachieving gifted students. Log your observations and reactions and use this recorded log to develop a Power Point presentation that describes your visit and relates to this class and course readings.</p>	<p>Completed brainstormed list of strengths and weaknesses</p> <p>Observation and participation logs together with completed Power Point presentation</p>	<p>Programming Criterion: Program Design  <a href="http://www.nagc.org/table3.htm">http://www.nagc.org/table3.htm</a></p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 14	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
<p>Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?</p>	<p>Describe how gifted education is organized at the state and local levels.</p>	<p>Conduct a search of current online resources for organizational models and summarize findings.</p> <p>Contact local gifted coordinator or lead teacher, asking for a mini-presentation or conference call related to gifted programming within district.</p> <p>Poll teachers enrolled in class to verify their exposure to the various delivery models in place within district. Chart results.</p> <p>Create a matrix or graphic organizer outlining the various gifted delivery models currently utilized within the school district.</p> <p>Peruse through the web sites of neighboring school</p>	<p>Active participation in group discussions and completed summaries</p> <p>Active participation in group discussions</p> <p>Completed chart</p> <p>Completed matrix or graphic organizers</p> <p>Completed chart of delivery models.</p>	<p>State Resources for Gifted Education <a href="http://ericec.org/fact/stateres.html">http://ericec.org/fact/stateres.html</a></p> <p>Florida Department of Education BISC Website, <a href="http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/ese-home.htm">http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/ese-home.htm</a></p> <p>“State Definitions for the Gifted and Talented Revisited”, by Kristen R. Stephens and Frances A. Karnes, <i>Exceptional Children</i>, 66, 219-238</p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 14	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
		<p>districts to identify service delivery models in place. Chart results.</p> <p><i>Analysis of data</i> Examine the relevant data for gifted students either throughout the State of Florida, by county, or throughout one county by school. Discuss (think, pair, share) finding and provide an explanation for the variances you observe.</p>	<p>Active participation in think pair share and discussion of findings</p>	

## Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 15	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
<p>Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?</p>	<p>Identify the social and emotional needs of gifted students and discuss their implications in determining services.</p>	<p>Research and discussion of program activities within your district.</p> <p>Develop a graphic organizer to present the results of your research.</p> <p>Facilitate a Jigsaw discussion opportunity to cover the major topics included in the Clark reading.</p> <p>Use the “Questions Often Asked” section (Clark, pp535-536) as the basis of a panel discussion.</p> <p>Create three groups and ask that each choose a particular ethnic, cultural or socio-economic minority discussed in the readings for this session. List culturally supported attitudes or abilities that children</p>	<p>Participation in discussions</p> <p>Completed graphic organizer of results</p> <p>Active participation in Jigsaw discussion</p> <p>Active participation in panel discussion</p> <p>Completed lists of attitudes or abilities as well as participation in discussions</p>	<p>“Appropriate Differentiated Services, Guides for Best Practices in the Education of Gifted Children.” Coleman &amp; Gallagher, <i>Gifted Child Today</i>, September/October 1995</p> <p>“Atypical Gifted” Understanding the Diversity of the Gifted.” Bertie Kingore and Lynlee Rinard, TEMPO, Spring 1997, newsletter of the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented</p> <p>ERIC Digest #E520 (previously listed in Q2, Obj.1)  <a href="http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed358676.html">http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed358676.html</a></p> <p>ERIC Digest #E480  <a href="http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed321485.html">http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed321485.html</a></p> <p>“National Excellence: A Case for Developing America’s Talent” Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Part 2,</p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 15	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
		<p>from this group might bring to the learning setting which would be facilitating and/or limiting. Discuss what impact these would have on the gifted programming and how these differences could be used to enhance learning. Consider using graphic representation of findings.</p> <p>Design a survey for educators, parents, and students to address issues related to gifted programming. Review what research says about the issues referenced in your survey; conduct your survey; report the results; and compare your findings to current literature. Your survey should include at least twenty potential respondents and a minimum of <b>five</b></p>	<p>Completed survey and review of issues</p>	<p><a href="http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part2.html">http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part2.html</a> Part 3, <a href="http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part3.html">http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part3.html</a></p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 15	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
		questions.		



### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 16	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
		explanation and blueprint of the game.		

## Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 17	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
<p>Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?</p>	<p>Discuss the positive and negative perceptions of various stakeholders regarding gifted education and compare to the perspectives presented in the federal report, "National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent."</p>	<p>Role play/debate why gifted students need different programs and curricular options as various stakeholders: parents of gifted and non-gifted, classroom teacher, teacher of gifted, gifted and non-gifted student, administrator, support staff, custodian, etc.</p> <p>Create a T-chart (pro and con listing) or matrix with comparisons of various stakeholders.</p> <p>Summarize ERIC documents and/or Think, Pair, Share discussions.</p> <p>Complete "Survey on Beliefs and Attitudes Regarding Gifted Programs" from Project GAGE.</p>	<p>Active participation in discussions and role-play</p> <p>Completed T-charts or matrices</p> <p>Completed document summaries</p> <p>Completed GAGE survey</p>	<p>"National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent"  <a href="http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/">http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/</a></p> <p>ERIC EC Digest #E476  <a href="http://ericec.org/digests/e476.html">http://ericec.org/digests/e476.html</a></p> <p>ERIC EC Digest #E525  <a href="http://ericec.org/digests/e525.html">http://ericec.org/digests/e525.html</a></p> <p>"Survey on Beliefs and Attitudes Regarding Gifted Programs" Project GAGE 1993 (HO 1.4)</p> <p>Beliefs About Education for Gifted Students" Project GAGE 1993</p>

## Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 18	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?	Describe the characteristics of an effective teacher of gifted students.	<p>Brainstorm and list characteristics of an effective teacher of the gifted.</p> <p>Create a T-chart cross-referencing identified characteristics with unique needs often associated with gifted learners.</p> <p>Create a cartoon, drawing, or caricature of an effective teacher of the gifted</p> <p>Role play an effective teacher of the gifted (include costumes, props). Contrast with role-play of ineffective teacher of the gifted.</p>	<p>Completed list of characteristics of an effective teacher of the gifted</p> <p>Completed T-chart</p> <p>Completed cartoon, drawing or caricature</p> <p>Active participation in role play</p>	<p>“Who Should Teach the Gifted” Imogene Ramsey <i>The Clearing House</i>, 1990, Vol. 63</p> <p>NAGC Position Paper: “Competencies Needed by Teachers of Gifted and Talented Students”</p> <p>Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Professional Development <a href="http://www.nagc.org/table6.htm">http://www.nagc.org/table6.htm</a></p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 19	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
What else should you consider?	<p>Demonstrate knowledge of the changing nature of state and national definitions of gifted.</p> <p>Identify the laws that directly impact gifted students and programs in Florida, including the relationship between ESE and gifted programs</p>	<p>Using the State Resources and State Definitions articles, choose two states that you have either lived in or have relatives or friends living in and compare and contrast the definitions of gifted in these two states. Prepare a chart to illustrate or summarize your findings.</p> <p>Create chart listing salient points of Florida's <u>State Rule for Gifted</u> vis-à-vis other exceptionalities.</p>	<p>Completed data spreadsheet and/or charts depicting common traits of states in defining gifted.</p> <p>Active participation in group discussions</p> <p>Completed charts</p>	<p>State Resources for Gifted Education— <a href="http://ericec.org/fact/stateres.html">http://ericec.org/fact/stateres.html</a></p> <p>Kristen R. Stephens and Frances A. Karnes, "State Definitions for the Gifted and Talented Revisited." <i>Exceptional Children</i>, 66, 219-238. (refer to Q2, Obj. 2)</p> <p><i>Florida Administrative Code (FAC) State Rule for Gifted</i> as per Chapter 6A-6.03019 <a href="http://fac.dos.state.fl.us/faconline/chapter06.pdf">http://fac.dos.state.fl.us/faconline/chapter06.pdf</a> pp 152-153</p>

### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 20	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
<p>What else should you consider?</p>	<p>Demonstrate understanding of major historical and contemporary trends that influence gifted education.</p>	<p>List the major events affecting the development of gifted education in the US and FL. Use that list to prepare a timeline of major events affecting the development of gifted education.</p> <p>Create a graphic representation or web illustrating the salient points of the selected readings.</p>	<p>Completed list and timeline</p> <p>Completed graphic representation or web</p>	<p>A Century of Gifted Education.” <i>Gifted Child Today Magazine</i>, Nov/Dec. 1999.  <a href="http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Did=000000047034484&amp;Fmt=3&amp;Deli=1&amp;Mtd=1&amp;Idx=3&amp;Sid=1&amp;RQT=309">http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Did=000000047034484&amp;Fmt=3&amp;Deli=1&amp;Mtd=1&amp;Idx=3&amp;Sid=1&amp;RQT=309</a></p> <p>“The Top 10 Events in Gifted Education.” <i>Gifted Child Today Magazine</i>, Nov/Dec. 1999.  <a href="http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Did=000000047034510&amp;Fmt=3&amp;Deli=1&amp;Mtd=1&amp;Idx=7&amp;Sid=1&amp;RQT=309">http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Did=000000047034510&amp;Fmt=3&amp;Deli=1&amp;Mtd=1&amp;Idx=7&amp;Sid=1&amp;RQT=309</a></p> <p>“My view of the "Top 10" events that have influenced the field of gifted education during the past century.” <i>Gifted Child Today Magazine</i>; Mobile; Nov/Dec 1999, Patricia A Haensly.  <a href="http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Did=000000047034474&amp;Fmt=3&amp;Deli=1&amp;Mtd=1&amp;Idx=6&amp;Sid=1&amp;RQT=309">http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Did=000000047034474&amp;Fmt=3&amp;Deli=1&amp;Mtd=1&amp;Idx=6&amp;Sid=1&amp;RQT=309</a></p>

## Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 21	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
What else should you consider?	<p>Identify and interpret current research findings and recommendations that impact gifted education, e.g. NAGC Program Standards.  <a href="http://www.nagc.org/webprek12.htm">http://www.nagc.org/webprek12.htm</a></p>	<p>Review district gifted program standards (when available) in light of those profiled on NAGC Program Standards site. Summarize findings.</p> <p>Assign related topics for research and discussion (based on <i>Kidsource</i> web site). Use ERIC Digest as preliminary source or reference.</p> <p>Create data spreadsheet which compares/contrasts common or major topics discussed in various articles, digests, and/or research papers.</p> <p>Create draft program standards for school district, if none exist.</p>	<p>Completed summary of findings</p> <p>Completed and/or presented research paper on assigned topic</p> <p>Completed data spreadsheet</p> <p>Completed draft program standards</p>	<p><a href="http://www.nagc.org/webprek12.htm">http://www.nagc.org/webprek12.htm</a></p> <p>Topics for research and discussion  <a href="http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/pages/ed.gifted.html">http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/pages/ed.gifted.html</a></p> <p>District curriculum and/or program standards</p>

## Nature and Needs Matrix

<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>Guiding Objectives Topic 22</b>	<b>Learning Options Activities</b>	<b>Evidence of Mastery</b>	<b>Resources</b>
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### Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 22	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
<p>What else should you consider?</p>	<p>Exhibit an understanding of the procedural safeguards for students who are gifted.</p>	<p>Review elements of the procedural safeguards, as outlined in the new language of IDEA and relate to those district practices and procedures currently in place. Summarize findings.</p> <p>Review Florida's "Summary of Procedural Safeguards for Students Who Are Gifted" and or ERIC Digest # E541. Summarize findings.</p> <p>Conduct a "round-robin" discussion on the elements of the procedural safeguards vis-à-vis information in ERIC Digest.</p> <p>Role play an eligibility staffing where parent requests explanation of Florida's procedural safeguards.</p>	<p>Completed summary of findings</p> <p>Review of salient points from suggested readings</p> <p>Active participation in round robin discussion</p> <p>Participation in role play opportunities</p>	<p>Nichcy's "Procedural safeguards at a glance."  <a href="http://www.nichcy.org/Trainpkg/traintxt/10txt.htm">http://www.nichcy.org/Trainpkg/traintxt/10txt.htm</a> - glance</p> <p>ERIC Digest #E541  <a href="http://ericec.org/digests/e541.html">http://ericec.org/digests/e541.html</a></p> <p>Florida's "Summary of Procedural Safeguards for Students Who Are Gifted."  <a href="http://www.firn.edu/doe/bin00014/pdf/giftgard.pdf">http://www.firn.edu/doe/bin00014/pdf/giftgard.pdf</a></p>

## Nature and Needs Matrix

### Nature and Needs Matrix

<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>Guiding Objectives Topic 23</b>	<b>Learning Options Activities</b>	<b>Evidence of Mastery</b>	<b>Resources</b>
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## Nature and Needs Matrix

Key Questions	Guiding Objectives Topic 23	Learning Options Activities	Evidence of Mastery	Resources
<p>What else should you consider?</p>	<p>Discuss the role of the parent, teacher, and student in the advocacy process.</p> <p>Discuss the need for and benefits of parent involvement in the delivery of gifted program services.</p>	<p>Outline the four pitfalls often associated with gifted advocacy (as outlined in the ERIC Digest <i>Supporting Gifted Education Through Advocacy</i>). Discuss implications and brainstorm ways to avoid pitfalls.</p> <p>Establish several work groups and assign each the task of creating a flow chart or graphic representation of the major steps involved in establishing and maintaining a successful parent advocacy group.</p> <p>Use Hogies Gifted web site <i>Gifted Advocacy</i> resource sheet to assign readings aimed at providing further information on parent, teacher, and/or student role in the advocacy process. Summarize findings and share information with group in a panel discussion format.</p>	<p>Completed outline and active participation in brainstorming activity</p> <p>Completed flow chart or graphic representation and active participation in group assignment</p> <p>Completed summary of readings and participation in panel discussions</p>	<p>ERIC Digest #E494  <a href="http://ericec.org/digests/darchives/e494.html">http://ericec.org/digests/darchives/e494.html</a></p> <p>Gifted Advocacy Resource Sheet  <a href="http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/advocacy.htm">http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/advocacy.htm</a></p>

## Nature and Needs Matrix

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**“Nature and Needs of Students Who Are Gifted”  
Pre/Post Test**

1. Identify three criteria a student must meet to be eligible for gifted services in the state of Florida.
2. Describe the screening and identification procedures, utilizing Plan A and Plan B parameters, for providing gifted service for a student in your school district.
3. Name and describe two screening tools used to identify students who are potentially gifted.
4. Compare and contrast two tests of intelligence currently used to identify students who are gifted.
5. Describe five characteristics unique to students who are gifted.
6. Cite five obstacles gifted students may encounter in the school setting.
7. Discuss how current legislative efforts have influenced gifted educational practices and program development in your county.
8. Delineate how you would create an educational environment that meets the needs of gifted students.
9. Create an outline for an informational session introducing the gifted program to the faculty at your school. Briefly support the elements of your outline.
10. The school advisory committee has asked your gifted team to discuss the issue of equity funding in gifted education to a group of parents whose children have not been identified as gifted. Justify your position.

# Nature and Needs of the Gifted

## Gifted Endorsement Module

### TOPIC 1 – COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE

**KEY QUESTION:** Who are they?

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Identify and describe cognitive and affective behaviors which lead to referrals to screening and testing for giftedness.
- Identify characteristics of giftedness and discuss the needs and problems associated with these characteristics.
- Discuss the role that creative thinking/process/products play in the identification of giftedness.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- cognitive and affective behavior
- screening and testing
- characteristics of giftedness
- needs and problems of the gifted
- perfectionism

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Clark: *Growing Up Gifted*: (6<sup>TH</sup> ed.) pp 56-62, pp 73-107
- ERIC #E476 *Giftedness and the Gifted: What's It All About?* (HO 1)
- ERIC #E527 *Nurturing Social-Emotional Development of Gifted Children* (HO 2)
- Hately: *Perfectionism and the Highly Gifted Child* (HO 3)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- List characteristics/ behaviors associated with giftedness.
- Share with small group/combine list for sharing with entire group.
- Compare completed (participant) list with those of researchers, access ERIC Digests and web sites.
- Facilitate a panel discussion describing cognitive and affective behaviors.
- Develop a chart of characteristics and associated problems and share with faculty.
- Create a brochure to share with educators/parents portraying gifted characteristics and the role that creative thinking, process, and products play in the identification process.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed list of characteristics/ behaviors associated with gifted
- active participation in panel discussions and small group activities
- completion and presentation of chart of characteristics/ problems
- Completion and presentation of brochure

## Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

### RESOURCES:

- Clark: *Growing Up Gifted*
- ERIC Digest #E476 <http://ericec.org/digests/e476.html>
- [www.gifteddevelopment.com/Articles/Characteristics\\_Scale.htm](http://www.gifteddevelopment.com/Articles/Characteristics_Scale.htm)
- ERIC Digest #E527 <http://ericec.org/digests/e527.html>
- A Glossary of Gifted Education (see appendix)  
<http://members.aol.com/svennord/ed/giftedgloss>
- Perfectionism and the Highly Gifted Child  
<http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/perfect.htm>

## **Giftedness and the Gifted: What's It All About?**

Author. (1990). *Giftedness and the Gifted: What's it All about? What Does Giftedness Mean?* ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children, Reston, VA. ERIC EC Digest #E476. <http://ericec.org/digests/e476.html>

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### **Giftedness and the Gifted: What's it All about? What Does Giftedness Mean?**

Many parents say, "I know what giftedness is, but I can't put it into words." This generally is followed by reference to a particular child who seems to manifest gifted behaviors. Unfortunately, there are many misconceptions of the term, all of which become deterrents to understanding and catering to the needs of children identified as gifted. Let's study the following statement:

"Giftedness is that precious endowment of potentially outstanding abilities which allows a person to interact with the environment with remarkably high levels of achievement and creativity."

This statement is the product of a small neighborhood group of parents who took a comprehensive view of the concept of giftedness before focusing on any attempt to define the gifted child. They thought, first, that within giftedness is a quality of innateness (or, as they said, "a gift conferred by nature"), and second, that one's environment is the arena in which the gifts come into play and develop. Therefore, they reasoned that the "remarkably high levels of achievement and creativity" result from a continuous and functional interaction between a person's inherent and acquired abilities and characteristics.

We often hear statements such as "She's a born artist," or "He's a natural athlete," or conversely, "Success never came easy for me; I had to learn the hard way," or "He's a self-made man." Those who manifest giftedness obviously have some inherent or inborn factors plus the motivation and stamina to learn from and cope with the rigors of living.

We suggest that you wrestle with the term in your own way, looking at giftedness as a concept that demands the investment of time, money, and energy. This will help you discuss giftedness more meaningfully with other parents, school administrators, school board members, or anyone who needs to understand the dynamics of the term.

### **Who Are Gifted Children?**

Former U. S. Commissioner of Education Sidney P. Marland, Jr., in his August 1971 report to Congress, stated,

"Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society" (Marland, 1972).

The same report continued:

"Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in any of the following areas, singly or in combination:

1. general intellectual ability
2. specific academic aptitude
3. creative or productive thinking
4. leadership ability
5. visual or performing arts
6. psychomotor ability."

Using a broad definition of giftedness, a school system could expect to identify 10% to 15% or more of its student population as gifted and talented. A brief description of each area of giftedness or talent as defined by the Office of Gifted and Talented will help you understand this definition.

- **General intellectual ability or talent.** Laypersons and educators alike usually define this in terms of a high intelligence test score--usually two standard deviations above the mean--on individual or group measures. Parents and teachers often recognize students with general intellectual talent by their wide-ranging fund of general information and high levels of vocabulary, memory, abstract word knowledge, and abstract reasoning.
- **Specific academic aptitude or talent.** Students with specific academic aptitudes are identified by their outstanding performance on an achievement or aptitude test in one area such as mathematics or language arts. The organizers of talent searches sponsored by a number of universities and colleges identify students with specific academic aptitude who score at the 97th percentile or higher on standard achievement tests and then give these students the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). Remarkably large numbers of students score at these high levels.
- **Creative and productive thinking.** This is the ability to produce new ideas by bringing together elements usually thought of as independent or dissimilar and the aptitude for developing new meanings that have social value. Characteristics of creative and productive students include openness to experience, setting personal standards for evaluation, ability to play with ideas, willingness to take risks, preference for complexity, tolerance for ambiguity, positive self-image, and the ability to become submerged in a task. Creative and productive students are

identified through the use of tests such as the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking or through demonstrated creative performance.

- **Leadership ability.** Leadership can be defined as the ability to direct individuals or groups to a common decision or action. Students who demonstrate giftedness in leadership ability use group skills and negotiate in difficult situations. Many teachers recognize leadership through a student's keen interest and skill in problem solving. Leadership characteristics include self-confidence, responsibility, cooperation, a tendency to dominate, and the ability to adapt readily to new situations. These students can be identified through instruments such as the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation Behavior (FIRO-B).
- **Visual and performing arts.** Gifted students with talent in the arts demonstrate special talents in visual art, music, dance, drama, or other related studies. These students can be identified by using task descriptions such as the Creative Products Scales, which were developed for the Detroit Public Schools by Patrick Byrons and Beverly Ness Parke of Wayne State University.
- **Psychomotor ability.** This involves kinesthetic motor abilities such as practical, spatial, mechanical, and physical skills. It is seldom used as a criterion in gifted programs.

### Other Viewpoints

Robert Sternberg and Robert Wagner (1982) have suggested that giftedness is a kind of mental self-management. The mental management of one's life in a constructive, purposeful way has three basic elements: adapting to environments, selecting new environments, and shaping environments. According to Sternberg and Wagner, the key psychological basis of intellectual giftedness resides in insight skills that include three main processes: (1) separating relevant from irrelevant information, (2) combining isolated pieces of information into a unified whole, and (3) relating newly acquired information to information acquired in the past.

Sternberg and Wagner emphasized problem-solving abilities and viewed the gifted student as one who processes information rapidly and uses insight abilities. Howard Gardner (1983) also suggested a concept of multiple intelligences, stating that there are several ways of viewing the world: linguistic, logical/mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligence.

Joseph Renzulli (1986) stated that gifted behavior reflects an interaction among three basic clusters of human traits: above-average general and/or specific abilities, high levels of task commitment (motivation), and high levels of creativity. According to Renzulli, gifted and talented children are those who possess or are capable of developing this composite of traits and applying them to any potentially valuable area of human performance.

A good source for pursuing the characteristics of giftedness in depth is Barbara Clark's informative book, *Growing Up Gifted* (1988), which presents an exhaustive

list of characteristics under five major headings: Cognitive (thinking), Affective (feeling), Physical, Intuitive, and Societal.

No one child manifests all of the attributes described by researchers and the Office of Gifted and Talented. Nevertheless, it is important for parents to be fully aware of the ways in which giftedness can be recognized. Often, certain behaviors such as constantly having unique solutions to problems, asking endless, probing questions, or even the masterful manipulation of others are regarded by parents as unnatural, unlike other children, and trying to parental patience. Therefore, our recommendation is to study the characteristics of gifted children with an open mind. Do not use the list as a scorecard; simply discuss and appreciate the characteristics and let common sense, coupled with love, take over.

### **Some General Characteristics**

(These are typical factors stressed by educational authorities as being indicative of giftedness. Obviously, no child is outstanding in all characteristics.)

1. Shows superior reasoning powers and marked ability to handle ideas; can generalize readily from specific facts and can see subtle relationships; has outstanding problem-solving ability.
2. Shows persistent intellectual curiosity; asks searching questions; shows exceptional interest in the nature of man and the universe.
3. Has a wide range of interests, often of an intellectual kind; develops one or more interests to considerable depth.
4. Is markedly superior in quality and quantity of written and/or spoken vocabulary; is interested in the subtleties of words and their uses.
5. Reads avidly and absorbs books well beyond his or her years.
6. Learns quickly and easily and retains what is learned; recalls important details, concepts and principles; comprehends readily.
7. Shows insight into arithmetical problems that require careful reasoning and grasps mathematical concepts readily.
8. Shows creative ability or imaginative expression in such things as music, art, dance, drama; shows sensitivity and finesse in rhythm, movement, and bodily control.
9. Sustains concentration for lengthy periods and shows outstanding responsibility and independence in classroom work.
10. Sets realistically high standards for self; is self-critical in evaluating and correcting his or her own efforts.
11. Shows initiative and originality in intellectual work; shows flexibility in thinking and considers problems from a number of viewpoints.
12. Observes keenly and is responsive to new ideas.
13. Shows social poise and an ability to communicate with adults in a mature way.
14. Gets excitement and pleasure from intellectual challenge; shows an alert and subtle sense of humor.

## **A Quick Look at Intelligence**

The attempts to define giftedness refer in one way or another to so-called "inborn" attributes, which, for lack of a better term, are called intelligence.

Significant efforts have been made to measure intelligence, but, because the concept is elusive, test constructors simply aim at testing what they feel are typical manifestations of intelligence in behaviors. Perhaps a little rhyme used for years by kindergarten teachers will help to describe this elusiveness:

"Nobody sees the wind; neither you, nor I. But when the trees bow down their heads, the wind is passing by."

Just as we cannot see the wind, we cannot find, operate on, or transplant intelligence. Yet we see the working or manifestations of intelligence in the behaviors of people.

The man-made computation of an intelligence quotient, or IQ, is probably the best general indicator of intelligence, but in no way is it infallible. All too often, a child's IQ is misunderstood and becomes a lifelong "handle." However, given our present knowledge, the results of a standardized intelligence test administered by a competent examiner provide as reliable an indication as possible of a person's potential ability to learn and cope. Until some scientific breakthrough is developed, we will rely on the IQ score to approximate how mentally gifted a person may be.

The nature of intelligence was once explained in this way:  
If intelligence were something you could see, touch, and weigh, it would be something like a can of paint. The genius would have a gallon, the person who has severe retardation, only half a pint. The rest of us would have varying amounts between these extremes, with the majority possessing about two quarts. This is clear enough, but it is only half the story.

Each can of paint contains the same five or six ingredients in varying amounts. One can may be "long" on oil, another on pigment, a third on turpentine, the fourth on gloss or drying agent. So, although two cans contain the same amount of paint, the paint may be of vastly different consistency, color, or character.

Good painters want to know the elements in the paint with which they are working. Parents and teachers want to know the kinds of intelligence with which they are working. What are the special qualities of this intelligence? In what proportions are these elements present? Most important, how can these elements be used?

We recommend that you do not become bogged down in probing into the concept of intelligence. Its intricacies and mysteries are fascinating, but it must not become a convenient synonym for giftedness. An excellent coverage of the concept of intelligence is provided by Barbara Clark in *Growing Up Gifted*.

The exciting advances in research on brain functioning, coupled with the realization that a child's intelligence is only one key to understanding giftedness, have underscored the importance of studying all characteristics of the gifted child.

### **The Gifted Child Is Called Many Things**

Often parents are confused by the many terms used in referring to the gifted child. Many parents hear these terms used--sometimes adopting them in their own conversations--without knowing whether they are synonymous with "gifted" or are just words that help to explain the concept.

- The term "genius" used to be widely employed but now it is reserved for reference only to the phenomenally gifted person.
- "Talented" tends to be used when referring to a particular strength or ability of a person. Thought should be given to whether the talent is truly a gift or is, rather, an ability that has become a highly developed skill through practice. It is safe to say that generally the person identified as gifted is one who has multiple talents of a high order.
- The terms "prodigy" and "precocious" are most commonly used when a child evidences a decidedly advanced degree of skill in a particular endeavor at a very early age, as well as a very disciplined type of motivation. It is interesting to note that the derivation of the words precocious or precocity comes from the ancient Greek word for "precooked" and connotes the idea of early ripening.
- "Superior" is a comparative term. When a child is classified as "superior," we would like to know to whom, or what group, he or she is superior, and to what degree. A child may be markedly superior to the majority of children in a specific mental ability such as verbal comprehension and at the same time be equally inferior in spatial relations or memory. The looseness of the term limits its usage in most cases to broad generalization.
- A "high IQ" may be anything, depending on what it is higher than.
- "Rapid learner" is a helpful term in understanding giftedness, because it is a distinct characteristic manifested by the identified gifted child.
- The term "exceptional" is appropriate when referring to the gifted child as being different in the characteristics listed earlier.

At this point it is important to bring into focus a term that continues to be tossed around altogether too loosely in reference to education of the gifted. That term is "elitism."

By derivation, elite means the choice, or best, or superior part of a body or class of persons. However, time and an overemphasis on egalitarianism have imparted a negative connotation to the word, implying snobbishness, selectivity, and unfair special attention.

But, in fact, gifted children are elite in the same way that anyone becomes a champion, a record-holder, a soloist, an inventor, or a leader in important realms of

human endeavor. Therefore, their parents have a distinct responsibility to challenge those who cry "elitism" and explain to them the true meaning of the term.

The only reason for mentioning these terms -- and there are many more -- is to caution parents that semantics and language usage can be tricky and confusing. Thus, your personal understanding and application of the term gifted becomes doubly important.

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Adapted by permission from D.W. Russell, D.G. Hayes, & B.L. Dockery, *My Child is Gifted! Now What Do I Do?* (2nd ed., 1988), North Carolina Association for the Gifted and Talented, Inc., PO Box 5394, Winston-Salem, NC 27113-5394; and D. Sisk, *The State of Gifted Education: Toward a Bright Future*, *Music Educators Journal* (March 1990), pp. 35-39.

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## Nurturing Social-Emotional Development of Gifted Children

Webb, J. T. (1994). *Nurturing Social-Emotional Development of Gifted Children*. ERIC EC Digest #E527. <http://ericec.org/digests/e527.html>

### What Are the Social-Emotional Needs of Gifted Children?

To a large degree, the needs of gifted children are the same as those of other children. The same developmental stages occur, though often at a younger age (Webb & Kleine, 1993). Gifted children may face the same potentially limiting problems, such as family poverty, substance abuse, or alcoholism. Some needs and problems, however, appear more often among gifted children.

### Types of Problems

It is helpful to conceptualize needs of gifted children in terms of those that arise because of the interaction with the environmental setting (e.g., family, school, or cultural milieu) and those that arise internally because of the very characteristics of the gifted child.

Several intellectual and personality attributes characterize gifted children and should be noted at the outset. These characteristics may be strengths, but potential problems also may be associated with them (Clark, 1992; Seago, 1974).

Some particularly common characteristics are shown in the table.

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### POSSIBLE PROBLEMS THAT MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH CHARACTERISTIC STRENGTHS OF GIFTED CHILDREN

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Strengths	Possible Problems
Acquires/retains information quickly	Impatient with others; dislikes basic routine.
Inquisitive; searches for significance.	Asks embarrassing questions; excessive in interests.
Intrinsic motivation.	Strong-willed; resists direction.
Enjoys problem-solving; able to conceptualize, abstract, synthesize.	Resists routine practice; questions teaching procedures.
Seeks cause-effect	Dislikes unclear/illogical areas

relations.	(e.g., traditions or feelings).
Emphasizes truth, equity, and fair play.	Worries about humanitarian concerns.
Seeks to organize things and people.	Constructs complicated rules; often seen as bossy.
Large facile vocabulary; advanced, broad information.	May use words to manipulate; bored with school and age-peers.
High expectations of self and others.	Intolerant, perfectionistic; may become depressed.
Creative/inventive; likes new ways of doing things.	May be seen as disruptive and out of step.
Intense concentration; long attention span and persistence in areas of interest.	Neglects duties or people during periods of focus; resists interruption; stubbornness.
Sensitivity, empathy; desire to be accepted by others.	Sensitivity to criticism or peer rejection.
High energy, alertness, eagerness.	Frustration with inactivity; may be seen as hyperactive.
Independent; prefers individualized work; reliant on self.	May reject parent or peer input; nonconformity.
Diverse interests and abilities; versatility	May appear disorganized or scattered; frustrated over lack of time.
Strong sense of humor.	Peers may misunderstand humor; may become "class clown" for attention.

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Adapted from Clark (1992) and Seagoe (1974).

These characteristics are seldom inherently problematic by themselves. More often, combinations of these characteristics lead to behavior patterns such as:

- **Uneven Development.** Motor skills, especially fine-motor, often lag behind cognitive conceptual abilities, particularly in preschool gifted children (Webb & Kleine, 1993). These children may see in their "mind's eye" what they want to do, construct, or draw; however, motor skills do not allow them to achieve the goal. Intense frustration and emotional outbursts may result.
- **Peer Relations.** As preschoolers and in primary grades, gifted children (particularly highly gifted) attempt to organize people and things. Their search for consistency emphasizes "rules," which they attempt to apply to others. They invent complex games and try to organize their playmates, often prompting resentment in their peers.
- **Excessive Self-Criticism.** The ability to see possibilities and alternatives may imply that youngsters see idealistic images of what they might be, and simultaneously berate themselves because they see how they are falling short of an ideal (Adderholt-Elliott, 1989; Powell & Haden, 1984; Whitmore, 1980).
- **Perfectionism.** The ability to see how one might ideally perform, combined with emotional intensity, leads many gifted children to unrealistically high expectations of themselves. In high ability children, perhaps 15-20% may be hindered significantly by perfectionism at some point in their academic careers, and even later in life.
- **Avoidance of Risk-Taking.** In the same way the gifted youngsters see the possibilities, they also see potential problems in undertaking those activities. Avoidance of potential problems can mean avoidance of risk-taking, and may result in underachievement (Whitmore, 1980).
- **Multipotentiality.** Gifted children often have several advanced capabilities and may be involved in diverse activities to an almost frantic degree. Though seldom a problem for the child, this may create problems for the family, as well as quandaries when decisions must be about career selection (Kerr, 1985; 1991).
- **Gifted Children with Disabilities.** Physical disabilities can prompt social and emotional difficulties. Intellect may be high, but motor difficulties such as cerebral palsy may prevent expression of potential. Visual or hearing impairment or a learning disability may cause frustration. Gifted children with disabilities tend to evaluate themselves more on what they are unable to do than on their substantial abilities (Whitmore & Maker, 1985).

### Problems from Outside Sources

Lack of understanding or support for gifted children, and sometimes actual ambivalence or hostility, creates significant problems (Webb & Kleine, 1993). Some common problem patterns are:

- **School Culture and Norms.** Gifted children, by definition, are "unusual" when compared with same-age children--at least in cognitive abilities--and require different educational experiences (Kleine & Webb, 1992). Schools, however, generally group children by age. The child often has a dilemma--conform to the expectations for the average child or be seen as nonconformist.
- **Expectations by Others.** Gifted children--particularly the more creative--do not conform. Nonconformists violate or challenge traditions, rituals, roles, or

expectations. Such behaviors often prompt discomfort in others. The gifted child, sensitive to others' discomfort, may then try to hide abilities.

- **Peer Relations.** Who is a peer for a gifted child? Gifted children need several peer groups because their interests are so varied. Their advanced levels of ability may steer them toward older children. They may choose peers by reading books (Halsted, 1994). Such children are often thought of as "loners." The conflict between fitting in and being an individual may be quite stressful.
- **Depression.** Depression is usually being angry at oneself or at a situation over which one has little or no control. In some families, continual evaluation and criticism of performance--one's own and others--is a tradition. Any natural tendency to self-evaluate likely will be inflated. Depression and academic underachievement may be increased.

Sometimes educational misplacement causes the gifted youngster to feel caught in a slow motion world. Depression may result because the child feels caught in an unchangeable situation.

- **Family Relations.** Families particularly influence the development of social and emotional competence. When problems occur, it is not because parents consciously decide to create difficulties for gifted children. It is because parents lack information about gifted children, or lack support for appropriate parenting, or are attempting to cope with their own unresolved problems (which may stem from their experiences with being gifted).

## Preventing Problems

- **Reach out to Parents.** Parents are particularly important in preventing social or emotional problems. Teaching, no matter how excellent or supportive, can seldom counteract inappropriate parenting. Supportive family environments, on the other hand, can counteract unhappy school experiences. Parents need information if they are to nurture well and to be wise advocates for their children.
- **Focus on Parents of Young Children.** Problems are best prevented by involving parents when children are young. Parents particularly must understand characteristics that may make gifted children seem different or difficult.
- **Educate and Involve Health-Care and Other Professionals.** Concentrated efforts should be made to involve such professionals in state and local meetings and in continuing education programs concerning gifted children. Pediatricians, psychologists, and other caregivers such as day-care providers typically have received little training about gifted children, and therefore can provide little assistance to parents (Webb & Kleine, 1993).
- **Use Educational Flexibility.** Gifted children require different and more flexible educational experiences. When the children come from multicultural or low-income families, educational flexibility and reaching out may be particularly necessary. Seven flexibly paced educational options, relatively easy to implement in most school settings (Cox, Daniel & Boston, 1985) are: early entrance; grade skipping; advanced level courses; compacted courses; continuous progress in the regular classroom; concurrent enrollment in advanced classes; and credit by examination.

These options are based on competence and demonstrated ability, rather than on arbitrary age groupings.

- **Establish Parent Discussion Groups.** Parents of gifted children typically have few opportunities to talk with other parents of gifted children. Discussion groups provide opportunities to "swap parenting recipes" and child-rearing experiences. Such experiences provide perspective as well as specific information (Webb & DeVries, 1993).

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## Perfectionism and the Highly Gifted Child

Hately, S. (n.d.). *Perfectionism and the Highly Gifted Child*. Retrieved from <http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/perfectionHG.htm>

Many have asked for suggestions about how to deal with the perfectionism of the highly gifted, and also the depression. Suggestions yes - although I should say upfront that I was susceptible to both these things, and still am to a lesser extent, so they're not problems I've really been able to solve. I do have some ideas on what might work, and what helped me. These are all only my opinions.

### Perfectionism

In terms of perfectionism, parents have to try to avoid putting pressure on children to be perfect - teachers and schools too ideally, although it may be very difficult to avoid perfectionism within a school environment - or any environment where parents don't have direct control.

By not putting pressure on children, I don't just mean telling them "you don't have to be perfect." I think that's a good start but it's not really enough in many cases. In my case, both of my parents are/were perfectionists themselves so it isn't surprising I developed those attitudes. Both of them came from backgrounds which required them to work very hard in order to achieve success (eventually they were both NCOs in the Australian Navy) and this meant that both had an attitude that doing less than your best was unacceptable. Eventually they realized that these attitudes were harming me, by forcing me to always seek perfection and being devastated when I did not, so they tried to do something about it, but with only limited success.

This was because they replaced the statement "second best is not good enough, you have to strive for perfection" by which I was brought up with the alternative statement "we don't expect you to be perfect, we just expect you to do your best." That really wasn't much of an improvement in my case, because I knew and they knew that my best was perfection - at least in terms of academic success. Being told you only need to do your best is no different from being told you need to be perfect, when your best equates to perfection.

And even when they tried telling me I didn't have to be perfect, it didn't help matters that much because their 'body language' and general performance said differently. I saw them achieving whatever they set out to achieve and continually trying until they did succeed, and I wanted to emulate them. I wanted their approval. So despite their words I still felt the need to be perfect.

What would have helped me? Not them lowering their standards - that would have been a bad idea - but by them making me aware of the mistakes they had made. I never saw these, I only saw their successes, and I was genuinely unaware that for everything they achieved, there had probably been some missteps, even if they succeeded in the end.

Secondly, I think it's important for the parent, particularly with a gifted child, to encourage their children to take risks - to do hard things, even knowing they will fail sometimes. Perhaps it is advisable to find something the child is not good at (perhaps sport) and encourage them to do it - not something they are necessarily bad at, but something that they have to work for and they don't always do perfectly. If a child has never experienced failure, they will eventually come to view anything less than total success as a failure. I didn't distinguish degrees of success or failure - there were no partial successes, only total successes and failures.

Also bear in mind that a gifted child may **want** to be perfect - they may want to succeed, and so they may push themselves very hard even without parental pressure. I know perfectionism is a problem, but I think that sometimes in an effort to avoid it, parents can end up making a child feel that there is something wrong with wanting to do well, and that desire may be an inherent part of them.

I had extensive psychological counseling growing up, and one of the people I saw explained to me the difference between 'the pursuit of excellence' and 'perfectionism'. He explained to me that sometimes the end results of these can be the same, but that one is healthy and one isn't. He gave me a list of examples of 'pursuit of excellence' as compared to 'perfectionism' which helped me to understand that and develop a different approach.

I found the list very useful because it helped me to see that there was a difference between these two things and also that abandoning perfectionism did not mean lowering the standards - it merely meant changing the views that lead me to those standards. These originally came from a book about perfectionism, but I never had the book so I'm unaware of its title.

### **The Pursuit of Excellence vs. Perfectionism**

- 🌍 The pursuit of excellence = doing the research necessary for a term paper, working hard on it, turning it in on time, and feeling good about it.
- 🌍 Perfectionism = doing three drafts, staying up two nights in a row, and handing your paper in late because **you had to get it right** - and still feeling bad about it.
- 🌍 The pursuit of excellence = studying for a test ahead of time, taking it with confidence, and feeling good about your score of 96.
- 🌍 Perfectionism = studying at the last minute (after three days of chronic

procrastination), taking the test with sweaty palms, and feeling depressed about your 96 because a friend got a 98.

- 🌍 The pursuit of excellence = choosing to work on group projects because you enjoy learning from the varied experiences and approaches of different people.
- 🌍 Perfectionism = always working alone because **no one** can do as good a job as you and you're not about to let anyone else slide by on **your** "A".
- 🌍 The pursuit of excellence = accepting an award with pride even though the engraver misspelled your name. (You know that it can be fixed later at the jewelry store).
- 🌍 Perfectionism = accepting the reward resentfully because that dumb engraver didn't get your name right.
- 🌍 The pursuit of excellence = reading the story you wrote for the school paper and noticing that the editor made some changes to the copy that really improved it.
- 🌍 Perfectionism = throwing a near tantrum because the editor dared to tamper with your work.
- 🌍 The pursuit of excellence = going out with people who are interesting, likeable, and fun to be with.
- 🌍 Perfectionism = refusing to go out with people who aren't straight "A" students.
- 🌍 The pursuit of excellence = being willing to try new things, take risks, and learn from your experiences **and** your mistakes.
- 🌍 Perfectionism = avoiding new experiences because you're terrified of making mistakes.

At the bottom of the sheet of paper this list is written on is the following:

"It is when we stop trying to do everything right that we start to do things well. These two things are not the same - but neither are they mutually exclusive."

These examples did help me to understand the difference between trying for the best, and having to be perfect, and in the end I did find that I did at least as well with much less stress.

It may help if you take this approach with your child - point out to them that moving away from perfectionism doesn't mean having to drop standards - it's a change in outlook, not necessarily a change in final results. If they have the ability, they may still achieve the same results, but they'll be doing it by concentrating on the path taken to achieve a result rather than the result itself - there is a real difference.

People tried to 'cure' me of perfectionism, which I resented - I felt they were asking me to lower my standards. As soon as I came to realise I could maintain my standards, but without having to be perfect, it became much easier for me to change.

## Depression

In terms of depression, I have much less useful (or otherwise) advice. This is because I have never conquered my depression. I am diagnosed as a clinical depressive and I control it with medication. This is something I resisted for a long time - I **hate** the idea of drugs controlling me or my mind (yes, I know that that really isn't what anti-depressants do, but I'm not always entirely rational, and my fears often are not). Eventually I realised my depression was controlling me and taking the medication was actually helping me to reassert the control I should have - at least that's the way I see it.

All I can suggest is that parents be alert to the signs of depression and take them seriously - my mother tells me she knew I was depressed from about the age of 15, even though I only realised it at about 18 (I've now worked out I first developed depression at around 11-12). She simply didn't know what to do about it - she tried to get me help but I resisted. But at least, her knowledge of the problem, meant there was an opportunity for help.

Also parents have to take their children's concerns seriously - I think, especially with younger children. Many people get depressed for fundamentally irrational reasons, so it can be very easy to dismiss their depression. It doesn't matter if the cause of depression is rational or not - it still needs to be dealt with. Many people seem to take depression, especially in adolescents much less seriously than they should. Of course, sometimes it isn't a major or long-term problem, but it obviously can be.

The only other thing I can add is that parents need to try and stop their children becoming afraid of depression. It needs to be treated as an illness like measles etc. Many people, unconsciously or otherwise, attach a stigma to depression - they make it out to be a sign of weakness, or they make it into a huge life-threatening problem. I know of a girl who has spent the last fifteen months refusing to tell her parents she was depressed because she was sure they would overreact, and start watching over her like a hawk in order to stop her suiciding (which was not a risk initially - her depression was mild and a bit of help would have probably dealt with it).

People are frightened of depression - parents especially - because it can be a very serious life-threatening problem. But at other times, it can be a short-term problem and can be quite mild. Unlike most illnesses, it's very hard to determine which it is, so some parents can overreact - understandable, because of their fear of suicide, but also potentially very dangerous to the chance of a child telling their parents. By the time I did manage to persuade this girl to tell her parents what was going on she had allowed things to get so bad, that suicide was beginning to be a risk - her fear of her parents overreacting to a minor problem turned it into a major one.

That's really all I know of to say. I hope it may be of some value.

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**TOPIC 2 – FAMILY AND COMMUNITY**

**KEY QUESTION:** Who are they?

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Demonstrate awareness of how factors such as family dynamics, culture, integration of self, and education influence the development of giftedness.
- Develop an awareness of existence of special populations.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- developmental factors
- family dynamics
- cultures
- special populations awareness

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Clark: *Growing Up Gifted* pp 150-164, pp 496-538
- ERIC #E497: Communicating with Culturally Diverse Parents of Exceptional Children (HO 1)
- “Family Factors Associated with High Academic Competence in Former Head Start Children at Third Grade.” (see resources)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Review the resources and create matrix listing different cultures and/or special populations (i.e. low socio-economic, twice exceptional, rural, minority, non-English/ESOL) and how these diversities might affect the development of gifted learners.
- Generate a list of questions related to the identified factors or matrix elements which might assist in the completion of the above matrix.
- Interview a family with a child that has been identified as gifted. Ask questions about family dynamics, cultures, curriculum, education, and early childhood development. Develop a format for the interview process for class use.
- Share your findings with a small group and prepare a list of common traits in each of the categories.
- Develop a newsletter concerning factors that a beginning teacher of the gifted will need to know about cultures and special populations. Also include any other information about family dynamics, curriculum, education, early childhood development, and underachieving gifted that might be helpful for beginning teachers.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed matrix

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- completed list of questions
- shared discussion of interview results and completion of interview format
- active participation in sharing process and completion of list of traits
- completed newsletter

### **RESOURCES:**

- “Family Factors Associated with High Academic Competence in Former Head Start Children at Third Grade.” *The Gifted Child Quarterly*, Fall 2002.
- ERIC Digest #E497  
<http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed333619.html>. “Guiding the Gifted Child: A Practical Source for Parents and Teachers,” Webb, JT, Meckstroth, EA, Tolan, SS

## **Communicating with Culturally Diverse Parents of Exceptional Children**

Author. (May 1991). *Communicating with Culturally Diverse Parents of Exceptional Children*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education. ERIC EC Digest #E497, ED333619.

Teachers and other professionals providing education-related services to exceptional children from different cultural backgrounds need to be aware of unique perspectives or communication styles common to those cultures. The ways people deal with feelings--especially disappointment, anxiety, fear, embarrassment, and anger--vary considerably, and often it is not easy to discern how parents are reacting to the realization that their child has a disability. It is especially important to help parents who have been outside the mainstream of U.S. education understand the educational options available. To do this, professionals need to be sensitive to the different values, experiences, and beliefs that may be held by members of various cultural and ethnic groups toward special education.

### **Use Language Parents Can Understand and Use Sensitivity in Communicating**

To facilitate communication, educators should use the following guidelines:

- Send messages home in the parent's native language.
- Use an appropriate reading level.
- Listen to messages being returned.

Courtesy, sincerity, and ample opportunity and time to convey concerns can promote communication with and participation by parents from different cultural backgrounds (Johnson & Ramirez, 1987). During meetings it is important to provide ample opportunity for parents to respond without interrupting. If a parent is formulating a response and has not expressed himself or herself quickly, this delay should not be viewed as a lack of interest in responding. Educators need to listen with empathy and realize that parents can change from feelings of trust to skepticism or curiosity as their understanding of programs and policies increases. It is important to realize that this reaction is normal and that parents may feel hostile or desperate as they attempt to sort out facts from their fundamental beliefs about education.

In communicating with families from different cultural groups, educators should keep in mind their diverse cultural styles. There is no one set

of characteristics that can be ascribed to all members of any ethnic group. Instead, the cultural traits of individuals range from those traditionally attributed to the ethnic group to those that are descriptive of a person who has been totally assimilated into the majority culture (Carter & Segura, 1979). Unfortunately, much of the literature describing individuals from minority groups reinforces existing stereotypes. This digest offers some observations about different cultural styles that should be considered cautiously in communications with families of differing cultural backgrounds (Cloud & Landurand, 1988; Johnson & Ramirez, 1987; Taylor, 1989).

### ***Sharing Space***

People from different cultures use, value, and share space differently. In some cultures it is considered appropriate for people to stand very close to each other while talking, whereas in other cultures people like to keep farther apart. For example, Hispanics often view Americans as being distant because they prefer more space between speakers. On the other hand, Americans often view individuals who come too close as pushy or invading their private space.

### ***Touching***

Rules for touching others vary from culture to culture. In Hispanic and other Latin cultures, two people engaged in conversation are often observed touching and individuals usually embrace when greeting each other. In other cultures, people are more restrained in their greetings. In the Asian/Vietnamese cultures, for example, it is not customary to shake hands with individuals of the opposite sex.

### ***Eye Contact***

Among African Americans it is customary for the listener to avert the eyes, whereas Euro-Americans prefer to make direct eye contact while listening. Among Hispanics, avoidance of direct eye contact is sometimes seen as a sign of attentiveness and respect, while sustained direct eye contact may be interpreted as a challenge to authority.

### ***Time Ordering of Interactions***

The maxim "business before pleasure" reflects the "one activity at a time" mindset of U.S. mainstream culture. Some cultures, however, are polychronic, that is, people typically handle several activities at the same time. Before getting down to business, Hispanics generally exchange lengthy greetings, pleasantries, and talk of things unrelated to the business at hand. Social interactions may continue to be interwoven throughout the conversation.

### **Provide Parents with Information**

Much of the need for information can be satisfied through regularly scheduled meetings, conferences, and planning sessions for a child's individualized education program (IEP). Educators may assume that their own familiarity with public policy is shared by parents of children with disabilities. Usually, this is not the case. Most parents of culturally diverse children with disabilities need help in understanding the basic tenets of the law, including their own rights and responsibilities.

### **Support Parents as They Learn How to Participate in the System**

Schools must make a sincere commitment to consider parents as partners in their children's education. Professionals who are attempting to work and communicate with parents of children with disabilities should be prepared to support the parents' rights and responsibilities. In essence, professionals should adopt the role of advocate. Parents from culturally diverse backgrounds should be encouraged to join parent organizations and share their cultural points of view.

Educators and other professionals should recognize parents' needs for the following:

- Assurance that they should not feel guilty about their child's disability.
- Acceptance of their feelings without labeling.
- Acceptance of them as people, rather than as a category.
- Help in seeing the positive aspects of the future.
- Recognition of what a big job it is to raise a child with disabilities and help in finding programs, services, and financial resources to make it possible for them to do the job with dignity.

Using these guidelines for communication, teachers and other professionals can assist parents of culturally diverse children with disabilities not only to combat feelings of isolation, but also to achieve a sense of belonging.

### **Encourage Parental Participation at Home**

A growing body of research evidence suggests that important benefits are gained by school-aged children when their parents provide support, encouragement, and direct instruction at home and when home-school communication is active. Children who receive parental help read much better than children who do not. Even instruction by highly competent specialists at school does not produce gains comparable to those obtained when students are tutored by their parents at home

(Hewison & Tizard, 1980). Even illiterate parents can promote the acquisition of reading skills by motivating their children, providing an environment that promotes the acquisition of literacy skills, providing comparative and contrasting cultural information, asking the children to read to them, and encouraging verbal interaction about written material.

## Resources

- Carter, T. P., & Segura, R. D. (1979). *Mexican Americans in school: A decade of change*. New York: College Entrance Examination Board.
- Chinn, P. C. (1984). *Education of culturally and linguistically different exceptional children*. Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. ED 256103.
- Cloud, N., & Landurand, P. M. (1988). *MULTISYSTEM (multicultural learning/teaching innovation) training program for special educators*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.
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- Marion, R. L. (1982). Communicating with parents of culturally diverse exceptional children. *Exceptional Children*, 46, 616-623.
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**TOPIC 3 – TYPICAL AND ATYPICAL**

**KEY QUESTION:** Who are they?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Demonstrate knowledge of normal and advanced (typical and atypical) child development.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- child development
- advanced development

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Clark: Growing Up Gifted pp 167-209
- “The Role of Managed Mental Health Care in Counseling Gifted Children and Families.” (HO 1)
- ERIC Digest #489 Helping Adolescents Adjust to Giftedness (HO 2)
- “The Parent’s Challenge” (HO 3)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Compare/contrast “normal” and “gifted” children of same age referencing developmental areas such as academics, social, emotional, and physical. Create a T chart or develop Venn diagrams to depict these comparisons.
- Observe two children one “normal” and one “gifted.” Observe the academics, social, emotional, and physical development of these two children. Develop an observation matrix for use by class. Chart observations using class created matrix.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed T-chart or Venn diagram
- active participation in class discussion as it relates to findings
- completed observation chart or matrix

**RESOURCES:**

- “The Role of Managed Mental Health Care in Counseling Gifted Children and Families,” *Roeper Review*, Fall 2001.
- ERIC Digest #E489 <http://ericec.org/digests/e489.html>
- “The Parent’s Challenge” David C. Baird’s Gifted Children Web-site.  
<http://www3.sympatico.ca/daba/gifted/parents.htm>  
<http://www3.sympatico.ca/daba/gifted/whoaref.htm>

## **The Role of Managed Mental Health Care in Counseling Gifted Children and Families**

Anderson, C. E. (Fall 2001). *The Role of Managed Mental Health Care in Counseling Gifted Children and Families*. Roeper Review; Bloomfield Hills.

This study examined the role of managed mental health care regarding counseling gifted children and their families. Frequently, gifted children and their families seek counseling because of a child's giftedness. Common examples include a child having social problems with peers, parents feeling ill equipped to raise a gifted child, and concerns with sibling relationships. There is evidence to suggest that some gifted children and families require counseling because of the issues that emerge from the child's giftedness (Colangelo, 1997; Moon, Kelly, & Feldhusen, 1997). Some suggest that counseling gifted children be mandatory within gifted curriculum as a preventive measure (Farrell, 1989). One of the major barriers to seeking counseling is the prohibitive cost, especially if a private provider is used. Although insurance benefits may be used to offset the cost, most insurance plans have a managed care component that can present an obstacle.

A criticism of managed care is its perceived reliance on a medical model. In other words, people who use their mental health insurance benefits must have an identified mental illness diagnosis to receive insurance reimbursement. This is referred to as medical necessity. A certification request for a gifted child or family with a gifted child falls into a gray area where medical necessity is difficult to determine. Fortunately, case managers who make certification decisions have some latitude to use their clinical skills and judgment to arrive at certification decisions when considering these types of requests.

The purpose of this study is to gain information and insight into how managed care reviewers respond to requests for services based on a child's giftedness. Managed care personnel who review treatment plans and treatment options with providers were surveyed to determine their qualifications and if they had any specialized knowledge of gifted children and families. This study examined how managed care personnel handled requests for reimbursement of counseling for a gifted child or family. The goal was to determine the number of requests these professionals receive for counseling because of a child's giftedness, the information required from the provider to authorize such services, and to find out if there is a distinct process that managed care personnel use when considering these requests. For the purpose of this study, gifted children are identified as those children who score in the top 5-10% in intellectual ability on standardized tests.

Method

## Participants

Fifty managed care personnel participated from two large, national managed care companies in a large Midwest urban area. To be considered, they had to be involved in the clinical work of managed care such as performing reviews of clinical information submitted by outpatient providers and inpatient facilities as well as case management. In other words, when a request for counseling for a gifted child or family with a gifted child is made, these are the professionals responsible for making the reimbursement decision. Completed surveys were received from 40 participants (80%). Eleven of the participants (27.5%) were male and 29 participants (72.5%) were female.

## Procedures

The study was divided into two parts. The first part was a survey designed to determine the clinical backgrounds and qualifications of managed care personnel and to provide insights into how they handled requests for certification of counseling for a gifted child or family. The survey also had a set of questions regarding the number of requests for counseling gifted children and families, questions concerning their attitudes towards counseling gifted children and families and questions concerning how much they knew about giftedness. Since the term giftedness was not defined on the survey, the participants answered the survey based on their personal impression of what giftedness means.

To expand the information from the survey, the second part of the study consisted of individual interviews with participants who agreed to be interviewed. The purpose of these interviews was to analyze the decision-making process they use when determining reimbursement for counseling of gifted children and their families.

Sixteen participants consented to be interviewed. However, two participants could not be located despite several attempts ( $n = 14$ ; 5 males, 9 females). The interviews consisted of questions (see Appendix) that were approved by an expert in qualitative research and an expert in counseling gifted children and families. Participants were interviewed by telephone and recorded with permission. The interview was then transcribed.

The participants' interview notes were reviewed only by the researcher and the interview transcripts were sent to the participants for their review and approval. Three participants requested changes in their transcripts. After two weeks, participants were contacted again to see if there was any information they wanted to revise and to offer a participant debriefing. No additional changes to the transcripts were requested.

## Results

## Surveys

Demographic information. Participants had an average of 3.22 years of working only for managed care companies (SD = 2.10; Range 3 months to 7 years). These participants averaged 12.40 years (SD = 5.91; Range 2 years to 29 years) of total clinical experience. Educational qualifications revealed all but one participant (97%) had a master's degree. The most common degrees were the Master of Social Work (n = 14; 35%) and the Master of Arts degree (n = 14; 35%). Participants with degrees not in the mental health disciplines (law and divinity) were both licensed counselors.

Perceptions and knowledge of gifted children and families. A slight majority (57.5%; n = 23) of participants thought gifted children had unique psychological problems as a result of being gifted. Specific problems identified by these participants included difficulty with peer relations, difficulty fitting in, and fear of failure. There was a similar perception regarding the family of a gifted child. A slight majority (62.5%; n = 25) of participants believed the families of a gifted child had unique psychological problems as a result of the child being gifted. Participants indicated families of a gifted child may have problems with sibling relationships, parenting issues, and experiencing frustration with the educational system. Results of this study also indicated managed care personnel lack information regarding gifted children and families. Participants did not feel especially qualified in the area of giftedness.

Managed care and gifted children and families. A minority of participants (25%; n = 10) indicated they had received a request for certification of counseling services for issues related to a child's giftedness. The number of requests ranged from one to six. If a request was received, a slight majority (62.5%; n = 25) indicated they would approve the request. Those who would approve the request indicated giftedness is a counseling issue. There was also the assertion that the family and child need support in coping with the gifted label. There was also the opinion that counseling for giftedness would only be appropriate if there was significant anxiety or depression on the part of the child or behavior problems (see Table 1).

## Individual Interviews

For the individual interviews, the constant comparative method of data analysis was used. The data from the interview transcripts were divided into units of analysis. In this study, a unit of data was a single statement relevant to the affect of managed mental health care on counseling gifted children and families. This included an event, assertion, feeling, interpretation, and generalizations. Units of data, for the purpose of this study, were "chunks of data which come out of the data themselves" (Marshall cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 345). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), a unit of data has two characteristics: it is heuristic, helping to generate some understanding of the inquirer's needs, and it is the

smallest piece of information that has meaning standing alone. Units of data include sentences, phrases, and paragraphs.

After all the units had been categorized and duplicate units had been discarded, the units and categories were reviewed to assure that each category was internally homogeneous and externally discrete. It was also assured that each category contained information relevant to the category title. Two or more categories containing the same type of information were combined. Analysis of the data revealed four recurring themes in the role of managed care in counseling gifted children and families: managed care system and giftedness, assessment issues, concurrent review, and training.

Managed care system and giftedness. According to participants, the beginning of the certification process was determining eligibility for benefits and issues of diagnosis and medical necessity. Participants realized a gifted child or family may have difficulty negotiating the managed care system's requirements.

*The problem you're going to face with managed care is that they're not necessarily going to see giftedness as a problem. There is no diagnosis of giftedness being a problem. So, because of that, if they couldn't come up with symptoms that needed to be treated under a current, recognizable diagnosis, I would imagine that it would be denied (Male #3).*

Another issue identified was the lack of certification requests for a gifted child or family. According to the survey results, 25% of participants had received such a request in the past year. However, the actual number of requests was small.

*I can't remember one person calling me up and saying "I've got a gifted kid and they're experiencing problems," I don't remember it. I've been doing this five and a half, going on six years and no one has called that I've ever had. They may call up but they're not specifically telling us the person is in a gifted program. (Male #4)*

Once participants resolved the general issues of managed care, they would continue the process of assessing the situation by gathering clinical information.

Assessment issues. The assessment process starts when a client, parent, or provider calls the managed care company and speaks to a case manager to obtain initial certification for counseling. The case manager asks questions to ascertain what the clinical situation involves. Based on the information gathered, a decision is made to certify or not certify the request. If a decision is made to not certify, there is an appeals process. Participants identified how they would use this information to arrive at their certification decision.

Part of my certification decision would be whether I thought that the issues caused by the giftedness fit into a counseling framework or fit into something that

*I thought counseling would help. It would mainly be whether it was something that counseling would help. (Female #6)*

*I'd ask what is the why now, why are you calling in asking for services now. I'd ask where are they having other difficulties in their life. I would ask about home and school. I'd ask what has been done to address it in the past, how he was doing in school, and community, and other activities, health, past mental health history. (Female #8)*

There was a lack of knowledge among some participants about gifted children. As a result, participants struggled when trying to assess a gifted child. Participants used their perceptions of gifted children to guide them in their assessment.

*From my understanding of the gifted child is that, often times, they feel isolated and have a difficult time reaching other people because of their high intellect. What you get normally is children who are doing fine, then boom, they begin to fail or they're having interpersonal problems. Then the child is having social or peer group problems. We're looking at who is kind of bankrupt in this situation whereas the gifted child has another kind of bankruptcy going on that's not been identified. (Male #4)*

Concurrent review. The assessment process is the beginning of the managed care process. If treatment is certified, sessions are approved and the client sees the provider. The number of sessions certified may vary. If the certified sessions are used and there is a further need for services, a concurrent review is required. The process of concurrent review is similar to assessment. Clinical information is gathered from the provider and a decision is made to continue authorizing sessions or not. Participants identified issues involved with doing concurrent reviews as well as what information is necessary to approve continuing sessions.

*"I would be looking if there has been some improvement. If there is no improvement, I would look for different modalities that have been tried for the client (Female #8)."*

In addition, participants wanted to see a specific treatment plan and areas of continued need. They also wanted to see the treatment plan being enacted, and a commitment to treatment.

*A treatment plan for the client would be needed; goals that were time limited and measurable so that you can measure the progress the client is making. I would also need to know what areas the client was still struggling in the continued need (Female #3).*

*I would need information on whether or not the treatment plan had been enacted, had been put in place, and what the results were (Male #3).*

*First and foremost, I would want to see a commitment to treatment. I wouldn't approve further sessions if they weren't committed to it (Female #9).*

Training. Staying on top of current clinical developments is as crucial for case managers as it is for providers. Keeping current with these developments will help ensure the best treatment. Participants were enthusiastic about receiving training about gifted children and families.

*It would be important for there to be some sort of workshop to heighten awareness of how being gifted mimics other things and that being gifted does create actual behavioral and emotional problems and that a snap diagnosis ought not to be made. (Female #4)*

*I think it would be helpful to have training on if there are certain diagnoses that gifted children tend to have more frequently. Or what are their different therapy needs and how they respond to therapy as compared to average intelligence kids. (Male #3)*

## Discussion

This study investigated the role of managed mental health care on counseling gifted children and families. More specifically, the purpose was to determine whether or not gifted children and families can receive reimbursement of counseling services for giftedness in a managed care system. The most important finding of this study is that giftedness is seen as a legitimate issue in dysfunction for a child and family. The reviewers are going beyond diagnostic criteria and treating giftedness as an exceptionality that can cause or be associated with mental health problems. This indicates that gifted children and their families can receive insurance reimbursement for counseling related to giftedness.

The results also suggest that these managed care reviewers have a fair amount of clinical experience and education to draw on in performing their managed care duties. This seems to contradict the statement that case managers are clinically inexperienced (Selekman, 1997). Their responses also indicate a proportion of reviewers lack information on the unique attributes of gifted children and families. This finding is strengthened by the overall lack of formal training participants indicated they had received relative to gifted children and families.

Managed care has been criticized for denying needed mental health services, yet a majority of participants reported they would approve, or at least consider, a request for counseling that most likely would not be for a recognized mental illness diagnosis. Indeed, only one participant indicated a request would not be approved.

The interview data provided insight into how managed care case managers would respond to a request for counseling for giftedness. Participants identified the difficulty gifted children and families could encounter when dealing with a managed care company. They also admitted the struggles they would have in diagnosing and assessing a gifted child or family. There was also some uncertainty among participants as to whether giftedness is a problem when compared to other clinical scenarios.

One consistent finding among participants was that requests for reimbursement of counseling for gifted children and families are uncommon. A reason identified by participants was that parents were not proactive in making the counseling needs of their children or families known. This could be a result of lack of understanding of this special population. This finding would be consistent with previous findings (Alsop, 1997; Emerick & Zirpoli, 1990).

Participants offered their insights into how the actual work of managed care is done. These insights seem to suggest the managed care process is collaborative as they identified how they would handle a certification request for a gifted child or family. Without specific knowledge of gifted children and families, they used general clinical assumptions to guide them in this process. An important issue to these participants was the quality of information received from those requesting the services. Most importantly, the survey data and interview data indicated that if gifted children and their families are in need of counseling, it is possible to receive these services in a managed care system.

The managed care process does require "jumping through hoops." Fortunately, there are things parents of gifted children can do to negotiate this process. First, it is absolutely crucial for the parents to understand their mental health benefits and the procedures for accessing them. This information is contained in the benefits handbook that each member receives when signing up for the insurance. If there are questions, parents need to contact the human resources representative at the company for which the member works or call the managed care company directly. If the procedures are not followed, the insurance will not pay.

Another important procedure to understand is whether or not a referral from a primary care physician is required. This is usually a requirement for members of a health maintenance organization (HMO). If a referral is required, reimbursement is usually denied until a referral is received. Other types of insurance plans require a referral from an approved provider to receive the highest amount of insurance reimbursement. Because each insurance plan's procedures are different, it is important to understand the procedures.

Another issue to clarify involves providers of counseling. Parents of a gifted child may have been recommended to a certain provider. All managed care companies have an approved panel of providers who have signed contracts to

provide services through that company. The recommended provider may or may not be on that panel. In the case of HMO's, the parent is limited to that panel's providers. No benefits are available for out-of-panel providers. In cases of preferred provider panels (PPO), the recommended provider may or may not be on that panel. If the provider is not on the panel, the parent usually has some benefits to access. These are called out-- of-network benefits and are not as good as in-network benefits. In such a case, the parent can access the out-of-network benefits or choose a network provider.

In rare instances, however, if the recommended provider is not a panel provider, the parent may be able to nominate that provider for inclusion in the network. This is a time consuming process and may not be successful. If managed care companies have determined they have enough providers in a geographic area, usually no new providers are added.

Another important thing to be cognizant of involves benefit maximums. Insurance benefits may have annual or lifetime maximums. An annual maximum means the amount of benefits available for a calendar year. This can be a dollar amount or a session amount. If an annual maximum is exceeded before the end of a calendar year, the full amount will be available at the beginning of the year. A lifetime maximum means the amount of benefits available for as long as a person is covered under that insurance plan. This can be a dollar amount or a session amount. Usually, a lifetime maximum is a dollar amount. If a lifetime maximum is exceeded, there are no more benefits available under that policy.

It is helpful for parents to keep track of benefits used and what is available. If the parents utilized the services of an out-of-network provider, they should be aware of the effect this will have on the in-network benefits. Usually, any amount of out-of-network benefits will be subtracted from in-network benefits. For example, if the member has 25 sessions of counseling available per year of in-network benefits and 10 sessions of counseling have been used for an out-of-network provider, the member will have 15 sessions left of an, benefit for that year. The parent may wish to talk with someone at the managed care company to make sure both are on the same page.

The certification process begins when parents call to obtain initial certification of counseling for their gifted child. During this process, parents must be prepared to provide information about the situation with the child or the family. The case manager will ask questions about the situation to ascertain the medical necessity of the request. Parents must be as specific as possible. If there are any behavior problem, an example would be helpful. If there is a decline in school performance, how much of a decline is important to include. It may also be helpful to have the school counselor or other professional call in and give information, provided confidentiality is maintained. Any psychological testing results are also helpful. It is important to mention that the case manager is totally dependent on the information received to arrive at a certification decision.

This process is necessary and fully explained in the benefits handbook. When members sign up for the insurance, they also agree to follow the procedures. Case managers are legally bound to maintain the confidentiality of any information they receive. They only ask questions that will help them to arrive at a positive reimbursement decision.

If counseling services are authorized, the number of sessions authorized should be clarified with the case manager. The sessions will have a beginning authorization date and an ending authorization date. The beginning authorization date is usually the date that the parent called for initial certification. The ending authorization date is the expiration of the certification. If all sessions have not been used by the ending date it can usually be extended. However, this should be clarified with the case manager. A written copy of this information is sent to all parties (parents and provider). If a copy is not received, parents should ask that one be sent and kept for their records. If these sessions are used and there is a continued need for counseling, the concurrent review is the responsibility of the provider and not the parent.

If services are not authorized, all is not lost. Parents can arrange for other providers who are knowledgeable of the clinical situation to call and provide additional information. If this is unsuccessful, parents can file an appeal. The procedures are explained in the benefits handbook or can be obtained from the case manager. In cases of an appeal, a managed care company psychiatrist will review the available clinical information. The psychiatrist will then make a determination of medical necessity. If the psychiatrist authorizes services, that is the end of the appeal process. If services are not authorized, the parent usually has two more levels of appeal available. Another psychiatrist will review the case and a decision will be made. If all appeals are exhausted and services are not authorized, unfortunately, there is little else that can be done.

### Limitations

The generalizability of this study's conclusions are limited by sample size and sample selection. A larger sample would be better. A more geographically representative sample would also have helped determine if there are differences of opinion of managed care reviewers relative to gifted children and families in certain regions. Such information is beneficial when planning training activities.

Another limitation was that participants were selected from only two managed care companies in the Midwest. There are dozens of managed care companies and they differ in terms of the educational and clinical requirements of employees. Different companies may use different utilization review criteria when making certification decisions. What might be approved at one company may be denied at another company. This is consistent with the statement made by Dworkin and Hirsch, "What is true for one managed care company is true for only one managed care company" (1994, p. 2).

## Conclusion

This study suggests that gifted children and families can receive insurance reimbursement for counseling related to giftedness. However, it is not a guarantee. There are many managed care companies with different requirements for reimbursement. Individual insurance plans vary widely in the amount of benefits offered. Although the managed care process may be inconvenient or seemingly restrictive, it is here to stay.

Several things need to be accomplished to make the interface of managed care and gifted children and families smoother. First, parents must understand their benefits and the procedures of their insurance and also advocate for the needs of their gifted child. Enlisting school counselors and other professionals and organizations may be needed,

Professional organizations for gifted children and families can also do their part. These organizations can increase awareness of the counseling needs of gifted children and families through funding of research, lobbying, and dissemination of information. This information should be available to counseling providers so they can be more knowledgeable on how to treat gifted children and families. Previous research indicates the providers who possess this knowledge are rare (Colangelo & Assouline, 1993). The use of distance learning and independent study should be encouraged and made available.

Participants in this study indicated an enthusiasm for receiving training about the counseling needs of gifted children and families. Training departments of managed care companies should keep this in mind and provide training opportunities for case managers. The managed care companies should also support case managers in receiving training through conferences, independent study, and technological media.

Parents of gifted children and organizations that serve gifted children need to learn more about the managed care process. Providers and managed care companies need to learn more about the counseling needs of gifted children and families. There should be open communication between all parties involved. If these things happen, hopefully gifted children and families who need counseling will be able to successfully negotiate the managed care process and receive the services they need.

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#### Appendix

##### Managed Care Caseworker Interview Questions

Question 1: If you have received a request for certification of mental health services from a parent or provider when the presenting issue was a child's giftedness, how would you handle this?

Question 2a: If you have not received a request as mentioned in question #1, how would you handle such a request?

Question 2b: What information would you need in order to make a positive decision regarding certification of services?

Question 3: What information would you need from a provider of mental health services to approve continuing services for a gifted child or family?

Question 4: What kinds of guidelines, information/or training (if any) do you think case managers need in order to make decisions regarding giftedness and certification of services?

## Helping Adolescents Adjust to Giftedness

Buescher, T. E., & Higham, S. (1990). Helping Adolescents Adjust to Giftedness. ERIC EC Digest #E489 ED321494

Young gifted people between the ages of 11 and 15 frequently report a range of problems as a result of their abundant gifts: perfectionism, competitiveness, unrealistic appraisal of their gifts, rejection from peers, confusion due to mixed messages about their talents, and parental and social pressures to achieve, as well as problems with unchallenging school programs or increased expectations. Some encounter difficulties in finding and choosing friends, a course of study, and, eventually, a career. The developmental issues that all adolescents encounter exist also for gifted students, yet they are further complicated by the special needs and characteristics of being gifted. Once counselors and parents are aware of these obstacles, they seem better able to understand and support gifted adolescents. Caring adults can assist these young people to "own" and develop their talents by understanding and responding to adjustment challenges and coping strategies.

### Challenges to Adjustment

Several dynamics of giftedness continually interfere with adjustment gains during adolescence. Buescher (1986) has found that, during the early years of adolescence, gifted young people encounter several potent obstacles, singly or in combination.

- **Ownership:** Talented adolescents simultaneously "own" and yet question the validity and reality of the abilities they possess. Some researchers (Olszewski, Kulieke, & Willis, 1987) have identified patterns of disbelief, doubt, and lack of self-esteem among older students and adults: the so-called "impostor syndrome" described by many talented individuals. While talents have been recognized in many cases at an early age, doubts about the accuracy of identification and the objectivity of parents or favorite teachers linger (Delisle & Galbraith, 1987; Galbraith, 1983). The power of peer pressure toward conformity, coupled with any adolescent's wavering sense of being predictable or intact, can lead to the denial of even the most outstanding ability. The conflict that ensues, whether mild or acute, needs to be resolved by gaining a more mature "ownership" and responsibility for the identified talent.

- A second basic pressure often experienced by gifted students is that, since they have been given gifts in abundance, **they feel they must give of themselves in abundance**. Often it is subtly implied that their abilities belong to parents, teachers, and society.
- **Dissonance**: By their own admission, talented adolescents often feel like perfectionists. They have learned to set their standards high, to expect to do more and be more than their abilities might allow. Childhood desires to do demanding tasks **perfectly** become compounded during adolescence. It is not uncommon for talented adolescents to experience real dissonance between what is actually done and how well they expected it to be accomplished. Often the dissonance perceived by young people is far greater than most parents or teachers realize.
- **Taking Risks**: While risk taking has been used to characterize younger gifted and talented children, it ironically decreases with age, so that the bright adolescent is much less likely to take chances than others. Why the shift in risk-taking behaviors? Gifted adolescents appear to be more aware of the repercussions of certain activities, whether these are positive or negative. They have learned to measure the decided advantages and disadvantages of numerous opportunities and to weigh alternatives. Yet their feigned agility at this too often leads them to reject even those acceptable activities that carry some risk (e.g., advanced placement courses, stiff competitions, public presentations), for which high success is less predictable and lower standards of performance less acceptable in their eyes. One other possible cause for less risk taking could be the need to maintain control--to remain in spheres of influence where challenging relationships, demanding coursework and teachers, or intense competition cannot enter without absolute personal control.
- **Competing Expectations**: Adolescents are vulnerable to criticism, suggestions, and emotional appeals from others. Parents, friends, siblings, and teachers are all eager to add their own expectations and observations to even the brightest students' intentions and goals. Often, others' expectations for talented young people compete with their own dreams and plans. Delisle (1985), in particular, has pointed out that the "pull" of an adolescent's own expectations must swim against the strong current posed by the "push" of others' desires and demands. The dilemma is complicated by the numerous options within the reach of a highly talented student: The greater the talent, the greater the expectations and outside interference.

Gifted adolescents consistently report dramatic episodes of being pushed to the point of doubt and despair by insensitive teachers, peers, and even parents. Teachers in secondary schools, in particular, have tried to disprove the talents of individual students, saying, in effect, "Prove to me you are as gifted as you think you are." Coping with the vagaries of adolescence while also proving oneself again and again in the classroom or peer group significantly drains energy allocated for the normal tasks of adjustment and leads to frequent frustration and isolation.

- **Impatience:** Like most other adolescents, gifted students can be impatient in many ways: eager to find solutions for difficult questions, anxious to develop satisfying friendships, and prone to selecting difficult but immediate alternatives for complex decisions. The predisposition for impulsive decision making, coupled with exceptional talent, can make young adolescents particularly intolerant of ambiguous, unresolved situations. Their impatience with a lack of clear-cut answers, options, or decisions drives them to seek answers where none readily exist, relying on an informing, though immature, sense of wisdom. The anger and disappointment when hasty resolutions fail can be difficult to surmount, particularly when less capable peers gloat about these failures.
- **Premature Identity:** It appears that the weight of competing expectations, low tolerance for ambiguity, and the pressure of multiple potentials each feed very early attempts to achieve an adultlike identity, a stage normally achieved after the age of 21. This can create a serious problem for talented adolescents. They seem to reach out prematurely for career choices that will short-cut the normal process of identity crisis and resolution.

### **Coping Strategies**

How can talented adolescents cope with the myriad obstacles to developing their talents? A study of young adolescents who participated in a talent search program Buescher & Higham (1985) suggested various strategies. Table 1 depicts the strategies suggested by the adolescents, arranged according to their assessment of acceptability for use.

Table 1. Coping Strategies Suggested by Adolescents  
(In Order by Weighted Ranking; 0 = Least Acceptable to Students; 10 = Most Acceptable):

- (0) Pretend not to know as much as you do.
- (1) Act like a "brain" so peers leave you alone.
- (2) Adjust language and behavior to disguise true abilities from your peers.
- (3) Avoid programs designed for gifted/talented students.
- (4) Be more active in community groups where age is no object.
- (5) Develop/excel in talent areas outside school setting.
- (6) Achieve in areas at school outside academics.
- (7) Build more relationships with adults.
- (8) Select programs and classes designed for gifted/talented students.
- (9) Make friends with other students with exceptional talents.
- (10) Accept and use abilities to help peers do better in classes.

The strategies were influenced by such factors as age, sex, and participation in programs for gifted students. For example, over the course of 4 years (ages 11 to 15), "using one's talent to help others" moved from second place to first, by way of third. "Achieving in school in areas outside academics" appeared to rise in popularity until the age of 14 but then dropped to third place. Students participating in special programs for the gifted were less likely, as they grew older, to mask their true abilities. Other studies have indicated that gifted females appear to be somewhat vulnerable to the pull of cultural expectations that drive them toward seeking peer acceptance rather than leadership and the full development of their abilities (Olszewski-Kubilius & Kulieke, 1989).

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School (pp. 102-124). New York: Teachers College Press. c1989 by  
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## The Parent's Challenge

Barid, D. (n.d.). *The Parent's Challenge*. David C. Baird's Gifted Children Website. Retrieved from <http://www3.sympatico.ca/daba/gifted/parents.htm>

### What is discipline?

Although gifted children are different, we must remember that they are children and not adults. Their social and emotional needs match closely with their chronological age rather than their mental age. A common sense approach to raising children also applies to the gifted child.

Dr. James Webb (*Guiding the Gifted Child*) believes it is vital to distinguish between discipline and punishment: 'Punishment is largely a negative term - a negative concept. Discipline, on the other hand, can be positive. Discipline means teaching children self-control so that they will ultimately be able to incorporate values and standards into their life in order to interact responsibly with others in predictable, mutually satisfying ways. Discipline can be a loving pattern that helps your child learn alternatives. It is an opportunity for your child to discover and depend upon his/her own power.'

Discipline is not the only question mark for parents of the gifted. There are natural fears that these parents may feel, for they have the responsibility to prepare their child to be an asset to society and to develop their child's abilities in intellectual, aesthetic, physical, emotional, social and moral areas.

### Natural fears:

- How well will my child integrate into society?
- Is my child smarter than I am?
- Can I find the best school that will fully develop his/her talents?
- Do I tell other people? What do I tell other people?
- How can I find their intellectual peers?
- Can this negatively affect my other children?
- Do their talents in some way fit into society?
- How do I encourage the child to achieve their intellectual potential?
- Can I afford special tutoring or private schools?
- What would happen if I

just did nothing?

Parents must talk to their gifted children and allow them to ask questions. Knowing the right answer to the child's questions is less important. Honesty comes first. A sincere "I don't know the answer to that question" might lead to searching for the answer TOGETHER which can be a challenging and rewarding experience for both child and parent.

Sometimes the way gifted children ask questions may frustrate or anger adults. Parents need to teach their children how to ask questions, formulate a different opinion or disagreement and how and when to use survival phrases such as:

- It seems as if ...
- I disagree with the statement because...
- In my opinion...
- Maybe there is another possibility that...
- Would you consider this point ...

By practicing and using these phrases at home, parents truly are giving their gifted child survival skills for succeeding in an adult world and ...parents should use the phrases too. The philosophy "Do as I say - not as I do" just doesn't hold water with kids.

### 10 suggestions for parents

1. *Treat them as children.* They are still children. They need what all other children need, love but controls, attention but discipline, your involvement, yet training in self-reliance and responsibility. Being gifted doesn't mean that they have a thorough understanding of adult problems such as death, sickness, sex, job loss, etc., and they may need reassurance in these areas.
2. *Maintain a consistent system of values and a happy, healthy home* Maintaining harmony in the family is important for their optimum development. As children have a greater sensitivity to the world around them, they will be more affected by family disruption. If there is a breakup within the family be honest with the child in a kind and gentle manner.

*3. Give them a special gift: Time*



Children need an understanding parent and/or role model, and they need to spend time with this person. The child needs your attention in order to discuss values and ideas. These children love the unconventional. You need to spend time helping them to understand the importance of behaving in a socially acceptable way.

*4. Don't stifle the gifted child*

Gifted children are known for their curiosity and parents should be especially careful not to stifle the gifted child who asks questions. In particular, the child should not be admonished for asking questions about what seems to be an improper or forbidden subject. The parent may, however, insist that questions not be asked at inappropriate times, and it may be necessary to ask the child to clarify and rephrase the question.

Questions don't need to be answered completely, but there should be a clue, guidance or even a question which sends the child into some larger direction. When the parents cannot answer the questions, they should direct the child to a resource which can.

*5. Intellectually stimulate the gifted*

Pushing and stimulation are different. You should seek in every way to stimulate and widen the child's mind and to enhance their research skills, through exposure to books, encyclopedias, collections, charts, travel, technology, the arts, etc. It is important to take your child to libraries and resource centres. Allow them to browse and read, let them use the computers and explore.

Often children who never get out of their home environment need to see what the city core is like. Expose them to museums and art galleries, educational institutions and historical places to enhance their background learning to feed their curiosity.

*6. Encourage friendships and discover hobbies*

Children need friends who have similar interests; to play games with and share ideas. Encourage friendships, talk to their friends and show your child the value of real friendship.

Parents should encourage their children's hobbies and know when to "back off" and leave the child on their own.

*7. Avoid discouraging unusual questions or attitudes*

Parents should avoid direct, indirect or unspoken attitudes that fantasy, originality, unusual questions, imaginary playmates, or out-of-the-ordinary mental processes are bad, or "different". They shouldn't be discouraged. Instead of laughing at the child, laugh with the child and seek to develop a sense of humour and a "balanced outlook" .

*8. Don't overschedule your child's life*

Many parents feel that all of the child's spare time must be filled up with extra lessons of all kinds. They are afraid that the child may become bored for a short time. Allow your child to become bored and let them find a way to fill this time, unscheduled by adults.

Sometimes parents are concerned if gifted children spend their time watching TV or reading comic books. While they should not spend all their time in doing so, they cannot be expected to perform at the top at all times. Remember, TV and comic books have their own place in a child's growth and development. Use common sense!

*9. Respect the child and his/her knowledge*

Respect the child and his/her knowledge. Sometimes, it can be greater than your own. Start with the assumption that the child did not intend to do wrong. Give general instructions to be carried out in the child's way, rather than specific commands that do not take into consideration your child's personality.

*10. Get*

Support the school's efforts to plan programs

*involved in  
school efforts  
and  
community  
programs to  
plan for gifted  
children*

and activities for these children. Help to interest the Parent/ Teacher Association in the problem. Support study groups, be active in the community and advocate for special education programs. Work to provide better community understanding and appreciation in the education of these children.

Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

**TOPIC 4 – POTENTIAL VERSUS PERFORMANCE**

**KEY QUESTION:** Who are they?

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Illustrate the relationship between high academic achievement and giftedness.
- Demonstrate understanding of the difference between potential vs. performance as it relates to giftedness.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- high academic achievement and giftedness
- potential vs. performance

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Read articles from website: <http://www.appliedmotivation.com/Readings.html>
- ERIC Digest #E 535: Gifted Learners and the Middle School: Problem or Promise? (HO 1)
- Anna Marks, "Able Underachievers". The British Journal of Educational Psychology, Dec. 2001. (HO 2)
- GT-Nurturing Young Gifted Children <http://ericec.org/faq/gt-nurt.html> (Behaviors parents notice) (HO 3)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Visit the website <http://www.appliedmotivation.com/Readings.html> Locate articles of interest on achievement. Who would profit from these articles and why? Prepare a summary of article(s) and be prepared to share with group.
- Poll participants about articles they reviewed. Develop Jigsaw groups for sharing information found in articles. Share findings.
- Prepare a chart of different types of achievement, problems, and possible solutions or suggestions.
- Conduct a panel discussion focusing on potential vs. performance as it relates to giftedness.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed summary of article(s)
- active participation in discussions related to findings
- completed charts
- active participation in panel discussion

**RESOURCES:**

- Carol J. Mills and Linda F. Brody "Overlooked and Unchallenged" *Knowledge Quest*.

Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

- <http://www.appliedmotivation.com/Readings.html>
- “A Quiet Crisis in Educating Talented Students”. *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America’s Talent*, October, 1993. (Appendix) [www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part1.html](http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part1.html)
- ERIC Digest E535. <http://ericec.org/digests/e535.html>

### **Gifted Learners and the Middle School: Problem or Promise?**

Tomlinson, C. A. (August 1995). *Gifted Learners and the Middle School: Problem or Promise?* ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education. ERIC EC Digest E535

Historically, tension has existed between gifted education and middle school education (Tomlinson, 1992), leaving some advocates of each educational practice suspicious of the other, and leaving middle school students who are advanced in one or more dimensions of learning in a sort of educational no-man's-land. While some legitimate areas of disagreement are likely to persist, there are enough areas of shared belief to bridge the practice between gifted education and middle school education. This digest provides an overview of (1) some areas of agreement between the fields, (2) some areas of tension, and (3) some promising directions that could engage educators in mutual planning of appropriate services for all middle school students, including those we sometimes call "gifted."

#### **Shared Beliefs of Gifted Education and Middle School Education**

There are at least three areas of common concern shared by gifted education and middle school education.

First, when it comes to articulated beliefs about what constitutes appropriate instruction for early adolescents, both groups are proponents of instruction that: (1) is theme based, (2) is interdisciplinary, (3) fosters student self-direction and independence, (4) promotes self-understanding, (5) incorporates basic skills, (6) is relevant to the learner and thus based on study of significant problems, (7) is student-centered, (8) promotes student discovery, (9) values group interaction, (10) is built upon student interest, (11) encourages critical and creative exploration of ideas, and (12) promotes student self-evaluation (e.g., Currier, 1986; Kaplan, 1979; Maker & Nielson, 1995; Stevenson, 1992).

Second, few educators of the gifted would argue with the core tenets set forth in Turning Points (Carnegie Task Force on the Education of Young Adolescents, 1989) that middle school programs should: (1) create small communities of learning within larger school settings, (2) teach a solid academic core, (3) ensure success for all students, (4) enable educators closest to students to make important decisions

about teaching and learning, (5) staff middle schools with teachers trained to work effectively with early adolescents, (6) promote health and fitness, (7) involve families in the education of learners, and (8) connect schools with communities.

Third, both groups of educators share a deep concern for the cognitive and affective welfare of early adolescent learners. Both groups also understand that there is great variability in the academic, social, emotional, and physical development of the early adolescent group. Both also subscribe to the reality that early adolescents are subject to change, including spurts in physical growth, new interests, and intellectual awareness. And both believe that all middle school students should take part in challenging learning experiences.

### **Gifted Education and Middle School Education: Problems and Promise**

The following issues have concerned educators in gifted education and middle level education. But emerging dialogue offers promise and some evident next steps for moving ahead into a more collaborative future (Clews, 1995).

#### **Excellence vs. Equity**

Problem:

Gifted education exists to foster development of high-end excellence. It therefore stresses practices that are most likely to promote "expertise" in learners with advanced performance and/or potential. Middle school education, on the other hand, views education through an equity lens, where all students have an equal opportunity to succeed. In a country that has struggled with the competing values of equity and excellence throughout its history (Gardner, 1961), it is not surprising that both groups continue to struggle with mechanisms for balancing the belief that all people should have equal opportunity with the belief that each individual should be assisted in developing his or her maximum capacity. The tension is heightened in the face of scarce resources for education.

Promising Directions:

- Understand the advantages of emphasizing both equity and excellence.
- Plan for both personal excellence and equity of access to advancement for all learners who are at risk, including those who are gifted.

- Emphasize raising the floors and eliminating the ceilings of educational performance.
- Emphasize both personal excellence and "apex" or "high-end" excellence.

### **Emphasis on Heterogeneity**

#### **Problem:**

Because middle school educators emphasize the negative impact of homogeneous grouping on at-risk learners, heterogeneity has become a hallmark descriptor of "good" middle schools (Carnegie Task Force on the Education of Young Adolescents, 1989). But educators of the gifted value the benefits of ability grouping for advanced learners. The availability of some forms of homogeneous grouping for these learners has been strongly advocated by proponents of gifted education (Allan, 1991). Educators of the gifted are also concerned about a lack of emphasis on differentiated instruction for academic diversity in heterogeneous classrooms in the literature of middle school, and reject a one-size-fits-all approach to educating students as varied as those who inhabit middle schools.

#### **Promising Directions:**

- Abandon practices that permit or encourage one-size-fits-all instruction.
- Replace exclusive services with more inclusive ones.
- Emphasize appropriately differentiated instruction in heterogeneous classrooms.
- Use heterogeneous teams, but group and regroup within a team and across teams for instructional purposes.
- Offer a variety of classes that allow for student choice.
- Emphasize use of gifted/talented resource specialists as part of interdisciplinary teams.

### **Use of Labels**

#### **Problem:**

Middle school advocates often reject labeling students as "learning disabled" or "gifted" (George, 1993). Such labeling, they believe, favors some students and stigmatizes others. Advocates of gifted education believe that identifying high potential and performance is necessary if awareness of and planning for talent development is to occur (Coleman & Gallagher, 1995).

Promising Directions :

- Develop ways to identify and address students' needs without overt labeling.
- Work to balance emphasis on student differences and student similarities.
- Use the term "gifted" as part of a phrase that describes students as gifted in mathematics, science, writing, visual arts, music, etc.

**Ambiguity About Appropriate Middle School Curricula**

Problem:

For much of its 30-year history, middle school education has attended more to issues such as student affect, scheduling, detracking, teaming, and school climate than to what constitutes effective and appropriate curricula in middle school classes (Beane, 1990). Educators of the gifted, who place strong value on challenging opportunities for advanced learners in their area(s) of strength, have been concerned about middle level education, including a basic skills approach to instruction. On the other hand, middle school educators argue that what has been called "gifted education" (e.g., enrichment, high level thinking, problem-solving) is good education for all learners, and should not be reserved for any single group of middle school students. They believe that energies of educators should be focused on establishing that sort of "good education" in heterogeneous classrooms and that the proliferation of such classrooms would serve all middle school students well.

Promising Directions:

- Disavow theories that present middle school students as incapable of high level thought and complex learning.
- Abandon practices that couch middle school as a place for drill and skill.
- Collaborate in establishing complex, problem-based, student-centered curricula, differentiated for student readiness, interest, and learning style.
- Articulate differences between "good education" and "good gifted education."
- Ensure that services restricted to gifted students are taught at a pace, level of complexity, and level of abstractness that is consistent with their abilities and instructional needs.

**Use of Cooperative Learning as an Instructional Strategy**

Problem:

Middle school educators promote cooperative learning as a prime means of establishing effective heterogeneous communities of learning (Slavin, 1980; Toepfer, 1992). Educators of the gifted find that overuse of some cooperative learning strategies, particularly those focused on learning of basic information and skills, results in a lack of challenge for advanced learners, inordinate use of these learners as "junior teachers," and inappropriate pressure for these learners to solve instructional problems (Robinson, 1990).

Promising Directions:

- Acknowledge the appropriateness of collaborative learning for early adolescents.
- Emphasize problem-based cooperative strategies rather than skill-focused cooperative strategies.
- Move away from cooperative learning as a "savior" strategy.
- Teach and balance cooperation, independence, and healthy competition.
- Use various grouping patterns in cooperative groups, based on instructional purpose.

### **Affective Needs of Early Adolescents**

Problem:

Middle school educators stress development of school environments in which early adolescents can belong to a nurturing group and have consistent access to adults who know and care about them (George & Shewey, 1994). Most educators of the gifted have concerns that affective experiences of advanced learners, which sometimes take on "a different spin," are overlooked in middle schools where advanced learning is deemphasized and where few teachers are trained to understand advanced learners. For example, peer pressure to conform may be experienced in a somewhat different context by many academically talented females and minority students than by other age mates (Ford, 1994; Kerr, 1985).

Promising Directions:

- Recognize that early adolescents share common affective needs, but experience them in differing ways.
- Plan for both achievement and belonging for advanced learners, with special emphasis on females and culturally diverse learners.

## **General Tension**

Problem:

The result of strongly held and often divergent views about educating early adolescents has led to some tension between the two groups of educators. Leaders of each group have not always attempted to build bridges. Publications, conferences, team meetings, and informal dialogues among educators have only recently begun to break ground in listening and attempting to find solutions.

Promising Directions:

- Acknowledge strengths and contributions of both practices.
- Use constructive language when discussing the issues.
- Communicate, cooperate, and collaborate at every level of educational practice.

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### **Able Underachievers**

Marks, A. (Dec 2001). *Able Underachievers*. The British Journal of Educational Psychology, Dec. 2001.

Children are too often described by phrases like 'could do better' or 'lacking motivation'. Such epithets indict their authors and the systems of which they are part far more than the hapless pupils. Even those who fall back on these clichés know that it would be more accurate to write 'could feel better' or 'lacking stimulation'. *Able Underachievers* sets out to redress the situation.

*Able Underachievers* is a timely contribution from an international coterie whose common interest is the education of the gifted and talented. The idea for the book was generated following the European Council for High Ability conference in Budapest in 1990 on the needs of the able but disadvantaged. The position of its editor, Professor Diane Montgomery, as a member of the UK government Advisory Group on the Gifted and Talented gives the book a sharp focus and an urgent political agenda. It is aimed at a wide readership of educationalists but also summarises the case that the editor is putting to the government.

The message is critical and subversive: that central government ignores or makes selective use of expert advice. The text claims that we now know how to motivate more able learners and educate pupils who are socially and culturally disadvantaged. Yet educational policy and practice are in a time warp that is exacerbating a range of problems. The authors of this book think that research indicates the need for state systems of education in many parts of the world to take a radically different direction. Their collective conclusion is that our education systems result in widespread underfunctioning with creative, imaginative and autonomous learners being particularly at risk. In *Able Underachievers* the authors build a case for a new pedagogy.

*Able Underachievers* upholds the principle of inclusive education. Montgomery makes a simple distinction between integration and inclusion, considering that 'in integrated education the learner is helped to adapt to meet the needs of the school whereas in inclusive education the school adapts to meet the needs of the learner'. A truly inclusive education system has no place for setting, streaming, acceleration, selection, ability grouping or special provision for the more able, according to this book. *Able Underachievers* contains 11 chapters written by gifted education specialists from three continents: North America, Europe and Australia. The notions of underfunctioning and/or underachieving are assumed to be valid although not easily defined. The experts agree that able underachievers share a characteristic profile described in terms of attitudes, self-esteem, learning styles, emotional and behavioral difficulties. The list of possible characteristics is lengthy and clearly there is no future in a tick list approach. The reader may suffer some initial confusion over the range and types of children the authors are

writing about. What is meant by the terms gifted, talented, highly able, high ability, able? Who functions in accordance with their ability and is it possible to overachieve?

The first part of the book is an analysis of why children underachieve. The authors perceive underfunctioning to arise from the complex interaction of many sources and hence that an ecological analysis is required followed by an ecosystemic approach to intervention. This section contains chapters on the issues that underlie underachievement, from perspectives on: critical philosophy, developmental approaches, gender issues, psychotherapy and identifying giftedness in special populations.

The second part looks in detail at models, strategies and provision for underachievers. The general thesis is that school systems have created disaffection and underachievement and are therefore at fault. Solutions to the problem involve ways of increasing cognitive challenge in the classroom. This requires a reappraisal of the learning process in the light of modern theories and research. The authors of this book take a social constructivist approach and base their ecosystemic interventions on an understanding of learning styles, cognitive skills, educational tasks and the social context. They share the view that the educational focus should be the learner and their learning with reference to all aspects of the person - 'intellect and emotion, action and reflectiveness, social justice and personal responsibility'.

Despite the genre of the book - a collection of chapters by different authors - the whole is coherent. Each chapter is a model of clarity. There is some repetition of ideas but this adds weight to the case being constructed. The clear division into sections on ecological analysis and ecosystemic intervention unites rather than divides theory and practice. *Able Underachievers* is stimulating, accessible and convincing. It should be useful reading material for staff rooms, university libraries, Whitehall desks and the Cabinet Office.

ANNA MARKS (c/o Teri-Anne Hornby, School of Education, University of Exeter)

### **GT-Nurturing Young Gifted Children (updated April 2001)**

Author. (n.d.). *Nurturing Young Gifted Children*. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education (ERIC EC). Retrieved from <http://ericec.org/faq/gt-nurt.html>

#### **How can the talents of young gifted children be assessed?**

There are many reasons for seeking intellectual and academic assessment, including educational planning, understanding a child's pattern of abilities, or checking for disabilities in a child who is known to be gifted. Sometimes young children lose interest in school and both parents and professionals want to find out if the child is receiving sufficient intellectual challenge or if social and emotional issues are involved.

A variety of instruments and procedures are used to assess the abilities of gifted students. Often the choice of instruments will depend upon the reasons for testing or the goal. For example, achievement tests are used to assess a child's accumulated knowledge relative to others and may be given to a group of children. These include the *Iowa Test of Basic Skills* (ITBS), *Terra Nova*, and *California Achievement Test* (CAT). Achievement tests are often used to determine a child's grade placement in a given subject when acceleration is considered. Intelligence tests, on the other hand, are used to assess a child's intellectual abilities and are typically administered to individual children by a professional psychologist. These include the *Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children* (WISC) or the *Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scales of Intelligence* (WPPSI) and the *Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale*.

Schools tend to shy away from testing and labeling young children, grades K through 3, primarily because children's rate of development and performance on tests are somewhat unstable before age 7 or 8. Also, some children from some minority groups or low income families have not been exposed to the types of experiences that go into acquired knowledge and are known to test lower than their abilities might predict. When schools do identify young children for a gifted program, they generally use alternative assessments. Informal or formal identification may involve procedures such as teacher assessment of a child's problem solving ability, parental assessment

of a child's abilities and interests, or the assessment of student products (portfolio assessment). Information on [alternative assessment](#) is available on this web site.

One way that parents can tell if their children might be gifted is to focus on a range of behaviors that occur in the daily conversations, activities, and responses to learning opportunities. Here is a list of characteristics common in gifted four-, five-, and six-year olds (Smutny, 2000):

- express curiosity about many things
- ask thoughtful questions
- have extensive vocabularies and use complex sentence structure
- are able to express themselves well
- solve problems in unique ways
- have good memories
- exhibit unusual talent in art, music, or creative dramatics
- exhibit especially original imaginations
- use previously learned things in new contexts
- are unusually able to order things in logical sequence
- discuss and elaborate on ideas
- are fast learners
- desire to work independently and take initiative
- exhibit wit and humor
- have sustained attention spans and are willing to persist on challenging tasks
- are very observant
- show talent in making up stories and telling them
- are interested in reading.

A gifted child might not show all of the above characteristics all the time, but parents and professionals will generally see a pattern when observing over an extended period of time.

Following are links to related Internet resources and Internet discussion groups, as well as selected citations from the ERIC database and the search terms we used to find the citations.

- [Internet Resources](http://ericec.org/faq/gt-urls.html) (http://ericec.org/faq/gt-urls.html)
- [Internet Discussion Groups](http://ericec.org/gifted.html) (http://ericec.org/gifted.html)

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You can search the ERIC database yourself on the Internet through either of the following web sites:

- [ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation \(ERIC AE\)](http://ericae.net/search.htm) (<http://ericae.net/search.htm>)
- [ERIC Clearinghouse on Information and Technology \(ERIC IT\)](http://ericir.syr.edu/Eric/) (<http://ericir.syr.edu/Eric/>).

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Internet: <http://ericec.org>

Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

**TOPIC 5 – THEORIES OF INTELLIGENCE**

**KEY QUESTION:** Who are they?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Compare and contrast the theories of intelligence that pertain to gifted education.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- theories of intelligence
- theorists of intelligence

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- ERIC 1985 Digest: Defining Giftedness (HO 1)
- Intelligence Theory and Testing: (HO 2)  
<http://www.indiana.edu/%7Eintell/alphaIndex.shtml>

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Choose one of the theorists of intelligence found at the Indiana web site. Read about this person to determine their theory about intelligence. Create PowerPoint presentations for group on the identified theory.
- Share and compare your theorist with others.

**THEORISTS**

- |                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| * Anne Anatasi          | * William Duff         |
| * Thomas Aquinas        | * Hermann Ebbinghaus   |
| * Aristotle             | * Edison, Thomas       |
| * Augustine of Hippo    | * Elesquirol, Jean     |
| * Bingham, Walter       | * Eysenck, Hans        |
| * Binet, Alfred         | * Sigmend Freud        |
| * Burt, Cyril           | * Francis Galton       |
| * Cattell, James McKeen | * Howard Gardner       |
| * Cattell, Raymond      | * Karl Gauss           |
| * Carrol, John          | * Goddard, Henry       |
| * Charcot, Jean-Martin  | * Goodenough, Florence |
| * Darwin Charles        | * J.P. Guilford        |
| * G. S. Hall            | * Thomas Hobbes        |
| * Leta Hollingworth     | * Harry Hollingworth   |
| * Juan Huarte           | * J. McVicker Hunt     |
| * J. McVicker Hunt      | * Barbel Inhelder      |
| * Jean Marc Itard       | * William James        |
| * Arthur Jensen         | * Leon Kamin           |

## Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

- \* Immanuel Kant
- \* John Locke
- \* Quinn McNemar
- \* Blaise Pascal
- \* Jean Piaget
- \* Plato
- \* Adam Smith
- \* William Stern
- \* Percival Symond
- \* Lewis Terman
- \* Edward Thorndike
- \* L.L. Titchene
- \* Edward Titchener
- \* Leve Vygotsky
- \* Clark Wissler
- \* Robert Yerkes
- \* Simon LaPlace
- \* John Stuart Mill
- \* William McDougall
- \* Karl Pearson
- \* Joseph Renzulli
- \* Simon Theodore
- \* Charles Spearman
- \* Robert Stern berg
- \* Calvin Taylor
- \* Christian Thomasius
- \* Robert Thorndike
- \* Thelma Thurstone
- \* Philip Vernon
- \* David Wechsler
- \* Wilhelm Wundt

### **EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- Completed Power Point presentation about the different theories and the theorists
- Active participation in class discussions

### **RESOURCES:**

- ERIC 1985 Digest <http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed262519.html>
- Intelligence Theory and Testing  
<http://www.indiana.edu/%7Eintell/alphaIndex.shtml>

### **Defining Giftedness (1985 Digest)**

McClellan, E. (1985). *Defining Giftedness*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children Reston, VA. ED262519.

#### **WHAT IS GIFTEDNESS?**

Historically, giftedness has been closely linked with the concept of genius. This association began around the turn of the century when psychologists developed tests that were designed to measure intelligence (Termam 1925); people who scored on the low end of the scale were labeled retarded, and those who scored on the high end were considered geniuses.

The use of intelligence tests as the single measure of giftedness has been greatly criticized in recent years, primarily because the tests are often biased in favor of the white middle class and because they penalize children with differing linguistic styles.

Also, many researchers and educators have come to believe that giftedness is more than high intellectual ability; it also includes creativity, memory, motivation, physical dexterity, social adeptness, and aesthetic sensitivity.

Dissatisfaction with a limited perspective has led researchers and educators to develop "broadened" definitions. One of the first educators to write about such an expansion was Hollingsworth. Although her research focused on children with IQ's above 170, Hollingsworth believed that children can have other types of gifts, such as mechanical aptitude or artistic ability (Pritchard 1951).

During the 1840s, the conception of giftedness was expanded further when the federal government began to take an interest in the education of gifted and talented children. This federal interest was sparked during and after World War II when policy makers perceived a need for technological advancement in order to maintain the nation's military and political superiority.

By 1950, Congress had passed the National Science Foundation Act which marked the first time the federal government provided funds specifically for the gifted and talented (Zettel 1982). By providing funds for encouraging students to develop their abilities in mathematics and the physical sciences, the Act led, in essence, to the designation of specific academic aptitude as a type of giftedness.

Another significant development in defining giftedness was the publication of Guilford's (1959) studies of the structure of the intellect. As early as 1950,

Guilford had urged psychologists to explore the area of creativity, or divergent thinking, but it was his structural model of the 120 theoretical components of intelligence that led to the development of tests to measure intellectual abilities other than those measured by conventional IQ tests.

The development of creativity tests and the results of many studies of the relationship between intelligence and creativity (Getzels and Jackson 1962) have led many educators to include creativity in their definitions. Renzulli (1976), for example, considers giftedness to be a combination of above average ability, creativity, and task commitment.

In 1969, Congress mandated a study by the U.S. Commissioner of Education to determine the extent to which the needs of gifted and talented children were being met (Sisk 1980). The ensuing document, known as the Marland Report (1972), contains a definition of giftedness that has been and continues to be the one most widely adopted or adapted by state and local education agencies. The Report states:

Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who, by virtue of outstanding abilities, are capable of high performance. These are children who require differential educational programs and/or services beyond those provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and the society.

Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in any of the following areas, singly or in combination:

- General intellectual ability
- Specific academic aptitude
- Creative or productive thinking
- Leadership ability
- Visual and performing arts
- Psychomotor ability

Although the definition has been criticized as being limiting (Reis and Renzulli 1982) and of promoting elitism (Feldman 1979), more than 80% of the 204 experts polled for their reactions to the Marland definition agreed with the selection of the categories of high intellectual ability, creative or productive thinking, specific academic aptitude, and ability in visual or performing arts.

Approximately half of the experts agreed that social adeptness and psychomotor ability should be included (Martinson 1975).

The federal government has included five broad areas in the definition found in the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981. In this act, block grants for education have been provided to the states; some of these funds may be used for:

special programs to identify, encourage, and meet the special educational needs of children who give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership capacity, or specific academic fields, and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities.

More recently, the Regulations for the Educational Security Act of 1984, which provides grants for strengthening the skills of teachers and instruction in mathematics, science, foreign languages, and computer learning have defined the term "gifted student" as a "student, identified by various measures, who demonstrates actual or potential high performance capability in the fields of mathematics, science, foreign languages, or computer learning." Gifted students may come from "historically underrepresented and underserved groups, including females, minorities, handicapped persons, persons of limited English-speaking proficiency, and migrants.

By placing an emphasis on math, science, foreign languages, and computer learning, this latest federal definition highlights the fact that the ways in which schools operationally define giftedness are often based on the needs of society. Definitions are also influenced by cultural and socioeconomic factors.

As Bernal points out, "what is clever and creative for a child in the barrio or on the reservation, where different value systems are in operation, will not be the same as for the child who grows up in the suburbs" (1974). For economically disadvantaged populations that place a heavy emphasis on preparing students for employment rather than college, a definition might recognize that students can be gifted in areas that are generally nonacademic in nature, such as carpentry or mechanics (McClellan 1984).

#### WHY DO WE NEED TO DEFINE GIFTEDNESS?

A definition of giftedness is the foundation upon which an educational program for gifted children is built. The specific abilities included in a definition determine the kinds of identification criteria that are used to select children for a program and the kinds of educational services that are provided to those children. The selection of abilities to be included in a definition is, therefore, very important to educators who must determine which children are designated as gifted and what kinds of educational services are provided to them.

For example, a definition that incorporates creativity as a category suggests that schools provide experiences aimed at developing the potential of children who have been identified as being creative; a definition that includes leadership ability suggests other types of identification criteria and educational experiences.

Educators who are charged with the responsibility of creating or maintaining programs for gifted children and youth face a different task when they must decide what giftedness is, how gifted children can be identified, and what services schools should provide. The following points are a guide for helping them make those decisions:

--The concept of giftedness is not limited to high intellectual ability. It also comprises creativity, ability in specific academic areas, ability in visual or performing arts, social adeptness, and physical dexterity.

--A program for gifted children should be based on the way in which the school system operationally defines giftedness. A definition should be the basis of decision regarding the selection of identification procedures as well as the provision of educational services for gifted children.

--Definitions of giftedness are influenced by social, political, economic, and cultural factors.

--Giftedness is found among all groups, including females, minorities, handicapped persons, persons with limited English-speaking proficiency, and migrants.

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History of the Influences in the Development of  
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Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
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**TOPIC 6 – PREVALENCE OF GIFTEDNESS**

**KEY QUESTION:** How do you find them?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Identify the incidence of identified gifted students at the local, state, and national levels. Discuss how the prevalence of gifted students varies based on various definitions of giftedness in terms of culture, socio-economic level, location, and other factors.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- local identification
- state identification
- national identification
- prevalence of gifted
- varying definitions

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Clark: *Growing Up Gifted* pp 341-351
- Is Every Child Gifted? (HO 1)
- 2004 LEA Profile (HO 2)
- ERIC Digest #E520 Identifying and Serving Recent Immigrant Children Who Are Gifted. (HO 3)
- State Policies Regarding Education of the Gifted as Reflected in Legislation and Regulation. Collaborative Research Study CRS93302 (HO 4 abstract)
- “*National Excellence: A Case For Developing America’s Talent*” Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Part 2, (How States and Districts Identify Gifted and Talented Students; The Number of Students Served) (see Appendix)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Use DOE/LEA web sites to identify incidence of gifted students at the district level for home district and several neighboring districts as well as at the state level. Chart findings.
- Create a data spreadsheet comparing the incidence of gifted in districts throughout the state.
- Read articles (resources) and seek out incidence of identified gifted students at the state level for other states and include information in spreadsheet. Convert spreadsheet data into bar graph and use as basis of discussion.
- Facilitate Jigsaw discussion (as per **Specific Delivery Strategies**) on articles and ERIC documents and create summaries as needed.

## Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

- Using the previously created incidence spreadsheet, facilitate a think/pair/share (TPS) discussion speculating on differences in identified incidence.
- Identify ethnic, racial, socio-economic breakdown of gifted population from current LEA profile. Create Excel type pie-charts of district data to profile ethnic, racial, socio-economic, Free-Reduced Lunch, and breakdown of entire district student population.

### **EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed chart of findings
- completed spreadsheet and/or graphic representation of data
- active participation in jigsaw discussion and completed summaries
- reporting out from TPS discussion
- completed pie charts of profile information

### **RESOURCES:**

- “Part II The Current Status of Education for the Nation’s Most Talented Students.” *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America’s Talent* – October 1993 <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part2.html>
- State Policies Regarding Education of the Gifted as Reflected in Legislation and Regulation. Collaborative Research Study CRS93302 (abstract) <http://searcher.eric.org/ericdb/ED379849.htm>
- Incidence of gifted: <http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/datapage.htm>
- Is Every Child Gifted?. *Roepert Review*, June 1997; Vol 19 Issue 4; Mark Runco
- 2004 LEA Profile <http://firn.edu/doe/commhome/datapage.htm>
- ERIC Digest #E520 <http://searcher.eric.org/digests/ed358676.html>

## Is Every Child Gifted

Runco, M. A. (June 1997). *Is every child gifted?* Roeper Review, Vol. 19, (4).

### IS EVERY CHILD GIFTED?

Definitions of giftedness now tend to recognize creative talents, but the most recent techniques for assessing creativity, which rely on productivity, may have caused certain problems for gifted education. The requirement for gifted students to produce something, for example, assumes that all of them have the expressive skills that support their insights, and this may not be true. It also assumes that products can be accurately evaluated; but unless quantity is used alone and quality entirely ignored, some sort of social significance is introduced into the assessment. Social significance can be very subjective, so the assessment loses its objectivity. Most important is that the insistence on productivity relegates potential. Children who have potential talent but need support, encouragement, and practice will be overlooked in favor of those children who already know how to construct and present socially meaningful products. This article concludes that, although we must be careful with broad and inclusive definitions of talent, we should leave productivity requirements out of definitions of giftedness.

Creativity is often included in definitions of giftedness. Renzulli (1978), for example, suggested that gifted individuals should be identified in terms of their creative skills, motivation, and their general intelligence, and the Javits Gifted and Talented Education Act of 1993 specified "capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas." Albert and Runco (1986), Milgram (in press), and Tannenbaum (1983) have also recognized creativity in their definitions of giftedness.

With their explicit recognition of creativity, these definitions have the obvious virtue of enlarging the pool of students who can be considered for gifted and talented programs. There is, however, an obstacle that must be overcome before these more inclusive definitions can be utilized. That obstacle has not yet received wide attention. This article was written in an effort to bring more attention to it and to discuss the options. The obstacle is essentially a problem of assessment.

The most recent techniques for the assessment of the creativity of potentially gifted children are far from satisfactory. In fact, many of the recent techniques are inconsistent with the broad, inclusive definitions of giftedness cited above. They are also largely incompatible with a fundamental premise of education, namely that education should supply students with the resources necessary to fulfill potentials. Certainly, not all current assessment techniques are misguided. There is, however, a clear trend towards assessments that rely on products and productivity, and the rationale for product-oriented assessments is contrary to the idea of widely distributed potentials. Also problematic are the assessment techniques that require that the child do something that has socially recognized value.

This article first reviews the inclusive view of giftedness and then moves to discussion of the product approach to creativity. The costs and benefits of each are compared, with the assumption that such a comparison will contribute to a clearer definition of giftedness. This should, in turn, benefit everyone interested in identifying and recognizing children with outstanding potential. This article includes discussion of why both the broad and inclusive and product-assessments cannot be used together, and why the product approach is incompatible with educational assumptions about children's potentials.

### The Broad and Inclusive View of Giftedness

For many years, general intelligence was emphasized in theories of giftedness, and the IQ was the only assessment used to identify gifted individuals. Some schools and gifted programs still rely on the IQ, but they are becoming the exception rather than the norm. This is in part because of the biases and limitations of IQ tests. Empirical research has, for instance, demonstrated that general intelligence is largely unrelated to creativity. Moreover, new theories of multiple talents offer attractive options to the view that only one general intelligence, assessed with the IQ, is important.

The most general concern with IQ tests may be an experiential bias whereby children with certain experiences perform well on the test because of those experiences and not just because they have high levels of ability. Worse yet is the situation when children perform poorly on a test solely because they lack particular experiences, and even though they have the cognitive potential to do well. Experiential biases may lead to unfair group differences which can be predicted from SES, verbal ability, or similar non-intellective factors. Proponents of IQ tests argue that children can only utilize experience if they have the abilities to do so, in which case the impact of experience is not a bias at all.

Even without any experiential bias, IQ tests are not sufficient when educators wish to know something about a child's creative potential (e.g., Albert & Runco, 1986; Milgram, in press; Renzulli, 1978). If creativity and general intelligence were strongly correlated, the latter could be used alone when attempting to identify gifted individuals. They are not strongly related, however, but are correlated only at the lower levels--below some moderate threshold (Runco & Albert, 1986).

The weak relationship is manifested when students do well on tests of intelligence, but then demonstrate only moderate or even low creative skills. The threshold noted above is most apparent when students who are manifestly creative have only moderate general intelligence. Creative students do not have exceptionally low intelligence test scores--there is a lower limit, which is, of course, the threshold. Significantly, exceptional general intelligence may actually preclude creative work (Hollingworth, 1942; Simonton, 1994). This occurs when students devote so much attention and mental energy to correct and conventional answers that they have difficulty considering unconventional and original ideas that might be creative.

Given that creative potential cannot be predicted from general intelligence, and given the strong possibility that IQ tests have certain biases, it is no surprise that multiple talents and student profiles are used more often now than is general intelligence in efforts to identify gifted students. Children might be average in certain areas of a profile, below average in others, and above average in still others. As Graber (personal communication, 2/96) put it, the individual need not be exceptional in any one area; what makes them exceptional is the combination of talents.

There are several ways to define multiple talents. The largest number of possible talents was suggested by J.P. Guilford (1983), who devoted his career to the psychometric confirmation of the specific facets of the structure of intellect. Late in his career, Guilford described 180 distinct kinds of ability. Several of these (e.g., divergent production, transformation) are specifically related to creativity.

A different tack was taken by Gardner (1983) when he suggested that talent can manifest itself in any one of seven domains. Each of these domains has its own core characteristics and developmental prerequisites. Gardner (1983) gave evidence for verbal-symbolic, mathematical-logical, kinesthetic, spatial, musical, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains, and he recently acknowledged that there might be an eighth domain. Gardner called this a naturalist domain, with talented persons sensitive to flora and fauna. Gardner also described his misgivings about the possibility of a spiritual or moral domain or intelligence.

A slightly different kind of specificity is suggested by componential theories of ability. Davidson and Steinberg (1983), for example, suggested that gifted children rely on the selective encoding of information and its selective comparison and selective combination. In this view, gifted children excel in problem solving and in their aptitude for insight because they are careful about what information they process and how they process it. In parallel componential theories, Amabile (in press; Conti & Amabile, in press) focused on motivation, domain-specific skill, and domain-specific knowledge, and Runco and Chand (1995) described how the creative thinking that characterizes gifted individuals may depend on problem finding, ideation, and evaluation. Runco and Chand also discussed how problem finding, ideation, and evaluation are supported by motivation (both intrinsic and extrinsic) and knowledge (both procedural and declarative).

Interestingly, it is not just the conception of cognitive ability that has broadened and become more specific. Gardner (1993) included intrapersonal abilities, and Amabile (1990) and Runco and Chand (1995) included intrinsic motivation in their models. In this sense, the broadening of talent includes extracognitive tendencies and aptitudes. In fact, some theorists focus on extracognitive components of talent. Gallagher (1985), for instance, emphasized overexcitabilities in his work on academic achievement and creativity (also see Piechowski, 1985).

There are numerous examples of the broad view of talent influencing definitions of giftedness. The definitions of Renzulli (1978), Albert and Runco (1986), Milgram (in press), and Tannenbaum (1983), for example, assume that talent is more than just

general cognitive ability, as does the Javits Gifted and Talented Education Act of 1993 and the empirical research which is designed to uncover the specific talents of gifted children (e.g., Davidson & Sternberg, 1983; Runco, 1986). The inclusive view is also apparent in suggestions that there are different kinds of giftedness. Sternberg and Lubart (in press), for instance, described a method for identifying three kinds of gifted individuals: analytical, creative, and practical.

Perrone (in press) described four types of giftedness. Type I is "generally high in achieving but not outstanding, somewhat sensitive...limited curiosity, slightly focused, unemotional, a little timid, passive, conforming...field dependent [and] quite dependent on adults for direction and recognition." Type II gifted are "high achievers in math and reading, highly assertive in their quest for knowledge, and energetic....Limited creativity and curiosity, conforming, neither adaptive nor introspective...more field independent." Type III gifted students are "high achievers, particularly in language arts...Very curious, adaptive, determined, venturesome, introspective, and creative. A little assertive, playful, energetic, and not very emotional...field sensitive and verbally assertive in their relationships with other pupils...leaders in different ways." Finally, Type IV pupils "show signs of underachievement...teachers [may be] concerned because of their disruptive classroom behavior....[They are] highly emotional, energetic, playful, and nonconforming....somewhat creative, venturesome, and curious...[with] little self-understanding or self control." Obviously Perrone (in press) was cognizant of important individual differences in social skills, assertiveness, and emotionality. This is noteworthy because, as noted above, the broadening of conceptions of talent does include extracognitive domains and aptitudes.

A broad view of talent allows assessment to use profiles rather than one single score. It should thus facilitate the accurate identification of gifted children and minimize identification errors. Talent is no longer defined solely in terms of general intelligence, and no longer a simply matter of some cutoff score (e.g., an IQ of 130 or performance at the 99th percentile). Such cutoff scores are necessary when using one index of talent, like the IQ, because the identification of gifted individuals is determined by one's standing relative to a particular point--the cutoff itself--on the continuum. But as Feldhusen (1995) put it, "whatever the construct of giftedness may be, it certainly is not a dichotomous variable or condition within a child."

Also noteworthy is that the inclusive approach is consistent with the educational and learning theories that emphasize the individuality of each student. Jean Piaget, B. F. Skinner, Jerome Bruner, and many other prominent educational and developmental theorists suggested that learning is optimized when the curriculum recognizes individual differences. Personalized systems of instruction exemplify this thinking, as does the growing body of research on learning styles (e.g., Milgram, Dunn, & Price, 1992). Indeed, learning styles provide yet more options for broadening definitions of talent.

Because these theories were based on empirical data, it is reasonable to conclude that the inclusive approach is not just a reflection of social or political affinities. This is an important point because it is possible that the broad and inclusive definitions of talent have become prevalent because American citizens---educators included---have a

powerful affinity for democratic educational practices (Abra, 1988), It is comfortable for parents and teachers to believe that everyone has the right to receive appropriate education, and the fight to develop his or her specific talents, even if those talents are idiosyncratic or unconventional.

The problem is that if new domains of talent continue to be proposed, and if the continual representing those talents continue to be extended, there may be a point at which everyone has at least one exceptional skill or aptitude. If more and more dimensions are added to profiles of talent, eventually those profiles will be so extensive that everyone is above average in at least one domain. This is not all that unlikely a possibility, especially considering that some of the domains already recognized easily could be divided further. The interpersonal domain, for example, might include tactical leadership and unintentional charisma; the verbal and symbolic domain might be delineated such that different kinds of writing and speech are separated; and the kinesthetic domain might be divided into subdomains representing different sports and performance areas, such as the various kinds of running and the various forms of dance.

No doubt such extensive profiles would minimize the probability that talented individuals are overlooked. The problem is that they can confuse what is meant by gifted or talent. Those could become synonymous with individual differences. This blurring of giftedness and individual differences may be less problematical than the alternative, which requires that talented children are productive and thereby narrows rather than broadens the concept of talent.

#### Creativity as Productivity and Achievement

Product assessments have a long history in the field of creativity research. Taylor (1975), for example, described levels of products (e.g., "ultimate products" reflecting total career output), and O'Quin and Besemer (1989) proposed an extensive list of criteria for product assessment. The product approach is attractive because it is so objective.

The same logic can be found in the tendency to attribute creativity only to high-level achievements and the persons who bring them about. This is currently an extremely common point of view. It has the significant implication that only the talent of unambiguously creative individuals should be studied. After all, if there is an all-important need to be entirely certain about the subject matter, and if the highest level of certainty is found with the least ambiguous cases, research should be directed specifically at the geniuses of the world.

A number of problems arise with this view, one being the definition of what is required for creativity. If achievement is included in definitions, individuals must express their ideas and work in a manner that convinces others of its value, and they must produce some thing, some product, In fact, it is not just one product that indicates talent but the tendency to produce numerous things (Simonton, 1994). One single product could be accidentally creative or otherwise exceptional--which is as a matter of fact one explanation for the creativity of children (see Wolf & Larson, 1980). In this view, children

do original things because they do not know any better! No such mistake will be made if talented individuals are productive over some period of time, and if they produce things on a regular basis.

Sternberg and Zhang (1995) included productivity as one of the five criteria in their pentagonal theory of giftedness. The other criteria are excellence, rarity, value, and demonstrability. In the words of Sternberg and Zhang, "to earn the label 'gifted' without qualification, a person must accomplish something" (p. 90). They did acknowledge the possibility of a kind of qualified giftedness, but the need for accomplishment is nearly as troublesome as the need for productivity, at least if accomplishment requires convincing others of the value of one's work. Delcourt (1993) also emphasized actual productivity in her study of gifted secondary school students, and Baum, Renzulli, and Hebert (1995) focused on creative productivity in their intervention to "reverse" underachievement among gifted students. Productivity has become a concern among those studying gifted and talented youth.

Certainly creative accomplishment requires originality, and originality in turn is most convincing when compared to objective standards. This suggests that ideas given by one child are compared with those of his or her peers in order to determine originality. The problem is that if creativity is defined only against certain objective standards, creative efforts must be expressed, shared, and socially recognized (Runco, 1995). This is what precludes much of the creative work of children. Their efforts can be quite personal. A child's potentially creative work might very well be original and adaptive for that individual child, but not original against larger norms. It may not even be clearly expressed.

The logic of product assessments is that they are objective and reliable, and thereby allow more precise quantification. Again, if gifted children produce something, there is something everyone can examine and clear evidence of the talent. Products can be counted, for example, and unreliable inferences about ability can be avoided. This is in contrast to tests of ability, which require some sort of inference, such as an inference about how the examinee will perform in the future. These are inferences in that all we really know after a test is that the examinee has or has not done well on the test; we know very little about performance in the natural environment. In this sense the product approach offers an alternative to ability testing. Recall here the possible biases inherent in IQ tests.

A more realistic view requires that creation and expression be distinguished from each other. In this view, the act of creation is defined in terms of personal constructions and insight. The social and expressive aspects of creative work can be ignored. This approach focuses on the things children can do--the personal but insightful things. It should satisfy the scientifically minded because it is parsimonious. Creativity is a kind of actual creation, and productivity and social recognition are to be treated as distinct kinds of expressive talent.

Creativity is distinct from expression and impact when it is defined in literal terms. The logic here is that any thinking or problem solving which involves the construction of new

meaning is creative. This may sound contrary to theories of creativity which emphasize originality and usefulness, but there is really no incompatibility because a personal construction is often original for and useful to that individual. This position is consistent with Piaget's theory of adaptation, although he described new understandings as constructions and structures, and he did not often use the term creativity (see Gruber, in press). The definition of creativity as construction of personal meaning is also consistent with the notion that creativity is a kind of self expression and self-actualization (Runco, Ebersole, & Mraz, 1992). Most significant is that the literal view is compatible with the idea that creativity is widely distributed. A wide distribution is implied because virtually every individual has the mental power to construct personal interpretations. Runco (! 993) and Torrance (in press), for example, discussed the creativity of disadvantaged children and the wide distribution of talent.

The idea that creativity requires only personal constructions of meaning does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that creativity is entirely universal. (If it did, boundaries of talent and individual differences would again be blurred.) There are individuals who are extremely unfortunate in their basic endowments, and this may preclude creative thinking. Similarly, individuals in certain clinical populations have difficulty maintaining contact with reality, and although they can produce original insights, those insights may not be useful at all because they are so entirely unrealistic. The theory of personal creativity used in this article does maintain the tradition of defining creative ideas as original and adaptive, fitting, or somehow appropriate. The unique feature of personal creativity is that the originality of the ideas and insights, and their adaptiveness or usefulness, is defined relative to the one child and not by larger standards. Still, unrealistic ideas are not adaptive, and thus psychotic thinking is not creative. The theory of personal creativity allows children to be labeled creative, even if not very productive, but it does not mean that creativity is universal.

### Conclusions

Two trends in the research on creatively gifted children were identified. The first trend is towards a very broad and inclusive definition of giftedness. The second trend, with its prerequisite of productivity, leads to a stringent and narrow definition. Admittedly, there is a potential problem with the first of these trends, which results from the increase in the number of dimensions suggested for profiles of potentially gifted persons. Ideally, this trend will lead to an optimal number of dimensions, with which the full range of possible talents can be recognized. That optimal number, which is at present an unknown quantity, would be large but not too large.

The trend towards an increased number of recognized talents is laudable but will create serious problems if it continues to the point at which the number of talents is equivalent to the full range of possible individual differences. If that occurs, the identification of talent would involve nothing more than the recognition of any and all individual differences.

The problems with the second trend, the product view, are more pressing and serious. Products can be seen, counted, and judged--they are useful because they allow objective assessment. However, productivity alone says little about quality. When the

quality of products is taken into account, the relativity of judgments becomes an issue. It is very difficult to say who is the best judge of an idea or product. In some instances experts may be required to offer judgments, but in other domains peers or even self-judgments may be most appropriate. The various groups may not agree (Runco, McCartney, & Svensen, 1994) and it may be very difficult to decide who is the most appropriate judge. Indeed, as Murray (1958) asked long ago, who is to judge the judges? And who is to judge the judges of the judges of the judges? This issue is magnified because many judges (especially the experts) may rely on traditional standards, but creative work is often surprising and novel. It may differ dramatically from what has been done before. Add to these issues the fact that children frequently rely on their own kinds of logic (Piaget, 1976; Runco, in press), and it is easy to see that their work may have some quality that judges cannot readily evaluate.

An equally serious problem for gifted education arises when accomplishment and productivity are taken as indicators of creative giftedness. Some creative children may be insightful but not expressive or productive. Does that mean this child is less creative? Certainly not, but it does suggest several educational objectives! The objectives would target the potential for insight and shape it such that the children will work to refine and express their ideas and insights.

The product approach to creativity has the notable advantage of being highly objective, but its cost may not justify its use. The most disconcerting cost is a loss of prospective students. The product approach takes us in the opposite direction from the broad view of giftedness. It restricts the possibility that children can be gifted. In fact, it essentially precludes it. Children are not going to change the thinking of experts about their field.

The product approach also relegates potential. Children who have potential talent but need support, encouragement, and practice will be overlooked in favor of those children who already know how to produce socially meaningful productions.

Given a choice, the narrower definition of giftedness should be used rather than the broader view. This is true in part because the broad view values individuality, and individuality should be respected for optimized and appropriate education. Individuality is especially important for creativity because with it comes variability, and variability in turn indicates room for original thinking and behavior. This should be emphasized because in practice it can be very difficult to accept and tolerate variability. Often individuals who contribute the most to this variability by virtue of their blatant originality are the most difficult to tolerate in a classroom or other group setting. They are outliers, and they are deviant, at least in a statistical sense (Richards, in press). They often distract others and detract from the smooth flow of activity within the classroom. It is too easy to view these unique persons as troublemakers. Certainly not all trouble-makers are creative, but just as certain is that all creative children are atypical, at least in their ideas, and perhaps in their manifest behavior. The point is that without the variability caused by originality and the traits of most creative children (most notably autonomy, nonconformity, and a questioning attitude), we would not have creative children.

Brodsky (1992) seemed to prefer a broad and less-restrictive definition of talent. She suggested that it might help current practice if we strengthen "attitudes and beliefs about the gifted that give them chances to make greater differentiations than past measures allowed." In some ways the broader conception is quite attractive; it should insure that we recognize each child as an individual with strengths and weaknesses. On the other hand, if talents are too broadly defined they become commensurate with individual differences. Surely it makes more sense to allow gifted children to maintain their status as creative and exceptional individuals.

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## Identifying and Serving Recent Immigrant Children Who Are Gifted

Harris, C. R. (1993). *Identifying and Serving Recent Immigrant Children Who Are Gifted*. ERIC Identifier: ERIC Digest #E520, ED358676.

The challenge of identifying gifted children and providing them with appropriate educational services is particularly complex when they are recent immigrants to the United States. Linguistic and cultural backgrounds, economic and attitudinal factors, socio-cultural peer-group expectations, cross-cultural stress, and intergenerational conflict may all influence efforts to recognize and provide appropriate learning opportunities. Although immigrant groups are culturally diverse, they share some unique challenges when interfacing with the setting.

### CHALLENGES

Linguistic. The process of second language acquisition is long, complex, and developmental. Therefore, attempting to determine a child's intellectual potential by using English-based assessment instruments can lead to erroneous conclusions. In addition, assessment in English is more likely to reflect knowledge of English and interpretation of grammatical structure than general intellectual potential.

Cultural. Traditional customs and sex-role behaviors are likely to differ greatly from those encountered in the U.S. (Sheehy, 1986; Goffin, 1988). Cultural differences in learning styles, listening behaviors (Trueba, 1983), and response patterns (Harris, 1988; Cohen, 1988) often underlie misinterpreted messages.

Economic. Recent immigrants may be economically poor; parents may be supporting households both here and in their native country (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1988). Families may be large; older school age children may need to work after school or miss school to earn money.

"Hidden" factors such as illegal immigrant status, limited knowledge about accessing social and health care services, neglect of basic health needs (Clark, 1988, October), and physical and psychological problems caused by the political environment in the native country (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1988) may also impede educational progress.

Attitudinal. Immigrants may demonstrate a very positive attitude towards schools and learning. However, they may experience feelings of guilt for family members who had to remain behind, or who were hurt or killed in their native country. A gifted child's heightened awareness may increase vulnerability when such circumstances exist.

When a parent or relative is an illegal immigrant the child may fear authority figures (Gratz & Pulley, 1984; Portes, McLeod & Parker, 1978; Vasquez, 1988), thereby preventing them from forming close relationships with teachers and other potentially helpful adults.

Socio-cultural and Peer Expectations. Racial or ethnic conflict, concern for personal safety, or conflicting peer expectations may cause tension and interfere with or redirect the child's natural curiosity and innate love of learning.

Cross-Cultural. Cross-cultural challenges are confusing and may delay the development of a child's sense of self-identity. Continuing cross-cultural stress is often difficult for immigrants to articulate.

Intergenerational. Immigrant children often serve as "interpreters" for the family, and as the children become Americanized they may begin to resent this responsibility, subsequently seen by elders as disassociating with tradition. Resultant coping strategies have a negative effect on self-concept and family relationships (Harris, 1988).

School System. A student may have little, sporadic, or possibly no schooling prior to arriving in the U. S. Wei (1983) reported the frequency of wrong dates of birth in school records, a face saving scheme to hide facts about lack of schooling (Center for Educational Research and Innovation, 1987; Vuong, 1988).

Crowded classrooms, staff opposition to special programs, and use of standardized tests may preclude entrance of recent immigrant children into gifted programs. Steinberg and Halsted (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1988) reported that immigrant children have often been tracked into English as a Second Language programs, then steered towards vocational courses.

Misplacement may occur if gifted students with disabilities are classified solely in terms of their disabilities (Poplin & Wright, 1983), a problem not confined to immigrants. Parents of immigrant children may distrust any "special" classes, including classes for gifted and talented (Wei, 1983).

A disproportionate number of immigrants have been referred for psychological services (Sugai and Maheady, 1988) when their behavior was misinterpreted and labeled as adjustment or achievement problems (Trueba, 1983).

## STRATEGIES

The following identification, service, and evaluation strategies may assist education professionals who want to meet the educational needs of immigrant children who are gifted.

### ●Linguistic

- 1. Provide enrichment activities to students perceived "not ready" for gifted programs.
- 2. Institute independent or small group research projects using native language references and resources.
- 3. Help staff members become aware of different language structures.

● Cultural

- 1. Explain the concept of gifted programs to parents in their native language.
- 2. Talk to parents in their native language to learn about aspects of giftedness valued by their culture.
- 3. Develop program services that are culturally sensitive and responsive.

● Economic

- 1. Consider aspirations of the immigrant group; pay attention to variables such as the parents' occupation and education.
- 2. Work only from facts, assume nothing about the economic status or educational background of the family.

● Attitudinal

- 1. Transmit a sense of self-reliance; use a biographical approach concentrating on positive aspects of problem-solving, task commitment, and decision making.
- 2. Encourage student involvement in publications or community programs.
- 3. Encourage journal writing and writing of stories and poems.
- 4. Provide opportunities for a peer support counseling group.

● Socio-cultural and Peer Group Expectations

- 1. Use narratives, role playing, and bibliotherapy to model conflict resolution.
- 2. Identify conflicting expectations, determine the causes, and provide intervention.

● Cross-Cultural

- 1. Increase motivation for children to identify themselves as candidates for gifted programs by referring to the gifted program as an opportunity for students to work harder and learn more.

- 2. Use care in selecting staff responsible for identification. If possible, select staff members who are familiar with the child's culture, country, or region.

- Intergenerational

- 1. Use nonverbal expressive arts to involve the family.
- 2. Use intra/intercultural peer referral as a source of identification.
- 3. Involve outreach workers for parents and other family members.
- 4. Use media services in the native language. These services are usually available through local agencies.

- School System

- 1. Identify or place students according to educational background and potential.
- 2. Interpret the child's behavior in the context of the child's experiences (Ramirez, 1988).
- 3. Use extracurricular activities as part of the identification process; incorporate successful activities and areas of interest into learning goals.
- 4. Ensure that the screening and selection committee has knowledge of creative production or performance in the respective culture. Include representative community members on selection committees. Avoid using standard identification instruments.
- 5. Assess from the perspective of individual learning styles.
- 6. Place the child in a minimal stress, "culturally congruent" (Trueba, 1983, p.412) environment and observe for a period of time.
- 7. Periodically, discuss attitudes and possible biases with teachers. Hold informal sessions to air problems and exchange ideas.
- 8. Use a developmental rather than a crisis-oriented model.

Both society and individuals benefit when a linguistically and culturally diverse population is tapped for talent potential. Problem areas must be defined in the light of specific cultures and culture differences. Attention must be directed to problem-specific techniques to ensure correct placement and opportunities for appropriately differentiated learning experiences that are culturally sensitive.

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**Publication Date:** 1993-06-00

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### **State Policies Regarding Education of the Gifted as Reflected in Legislation and Regulation**

Passow, A. H. & Rudnitski, R. A. (October 1993). *State Policies Regarding Education of the Gifted as Reflected in Legislation and Regulation. Collaborative Research Study*. ERIC Document ED 379849.

**Abstract:** This study analyzed state policies on the identification and education of gifted students as reflected in legislation, regulations, rules, recommendations, and guidelines provided by 49 states. The elements examined include: (1) state mandated services, (2) district plans for the gifted, (3) gifted education as part of special education, (4) philosophy or rationale, (5) definitions of gifted and talented, (6) identification procedures, (7) programs for the gifted, (8) differentiated curriculum and instruction, (9) counseling and other support services, (10) parent involvement, (11) program evaluation, (12) teacher education and certification, and (13) state funding for the gifted. The analysis indicated that all states have formulated policies that support education of the gifted and talented but that considerable variability among states exists with respect to specific components. Major recommendations are made in the following areas: establishing challenging curriculum standards; providing high-level learning opportunities; ensuring access to early childhood education; offering extended opportunities for economically disadvantaged and minority children; providing teacher training and technical assistance; and matching the high performance of similar students throughout the world. (Contains 76 references.) (DB)

Passow, A. H. & Rudnitski, R. A. (October 1993). *State Policies Regarding Education of the Gifted as Reflected in Legislation and Regulation. Collaborative Research Study*. ERIC Document ED 379849.

**Title:** State Policies Regarding Education of the Gifted as Reflected in Legislation and Regulation. Collaborative Research Study CRS93302.

**Author:** Passow, A. Harry; Rudnitski, Rose A.

**Note:** 107p.

**Publication Year:** Oct 1993

**Document Type:** Evaluative Report (142)

**Target Audience:** Policymakers

**ERIC Identifier:** ED379849

**Clearinghouse Identifier:** EC303722

**Available from:** NRC/GT, The University of Connecticut, 362 Fairfield Rd., U-7, Storrs, CT 06269- 2007.

You may be able to [order this document](#) from the [ERIC Document Reproduction Service](#).

**Descriptors:** \* Ability Identification; Compliance [Legal]; Counseling; \* Curriculum Development; Definitions; Educational Legislation; Educational Philosophy; \* Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; Eligibility; Financial Support; \* Gifted; National Surveys; Needs Assessment; Program Development; Program Evaluation; Pupil

Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

N & N Topic 6 HO 4 (Abstract)

Personnel Services; School Districts; State Aid; State Legislation; \* State Programs; \*  
State Standards; Teacher Education

**Identifiers:** \*Differentiated Curriculum [Gifted]

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Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

**TOPIC 7 – EMERGING TRENDS**

**KEY QUESTION:** How do you find them?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Identify emerging national and state trends in the identification of students who may be gifted.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- national trends in identification
- state trends in identification

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- ERIC GT Identification (HO 1 abstract)
- State Gifted Education Associations (HO 2)
- Using Tests to Identify Gifted Students. HO 3)
- State definitions for the gifted and talented revisited. (HO 4)
- Towards a New Paradigm for Identifying Talent Potential (HO 5)
- Historical Perspective (HO 6)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Assign readings and review of web-sites. Summarize findings.
- Facilitate jigsaw discussions on readings.
- Provide opportunity for panel discussion of articles and readings.
- Complete Major Historical Events Affecting Gifted Education worksheet.
- Facilitate jigsaw discussion on State definitions for the gifted and talented revisited.
- Using chart paper and above article, re-create matrix depicting identification and definition practices for states to assist in internalization of material and concepts.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed summaries of readings and/or reviews
- active participation in jigsaw discussion.
- active participation in panel discussion.
- completed Major Historical Events worksheet.
- active participation in Jigsaw discussion on article
- completed states' definition matrix

**RESOURCES:**

- GT Identification (updated September 1998) (<http://ericec.org/faq/gt-idsch.html>)

Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

- State Gifted Education Associations  
<http://www.nagc.org/state/statehome.htm>
- Using Tests to Identify Gifted Students. NAGC Position Paper;  
<http://www.nagc.org/Policy/pospaper.html>
- Historical Perspective *Gifted Challenge Grant*, Florida DOE
- Major Historical Events Affecting Gifted Education *Gifted Challenge Grant*, Florida DOE worksheet
- State definitions for the gifted and talented revisited. *Exceptional Children*; Reston; Winter 2000; Kristen Stephens; Francis Karnes
- Towards a New Paradigm for Identifying Talent Potential  
<http://searcheric.org/ERICDB/ED388020.HTM>

## GT Identification

Author. (1998). *How can gifted students be identified for programs or services?* Retrieved from <http://ericec.org/faq/gt-idsch.html>

### **How can gifted students be identified for programs or services?**

School districts throughout the United States use a variety of instruments and procedures to identify gifted students. When looking for instruments or procedures, it is important to keep in mind that identification should be linked to both the population and the curriculum. If an instrument is used to identify specific areas of talent, then school districts should be prepared to adapt curriculum to nurture and foster identified talent areas.

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented at the University of Virginia has a database of empirically sound identification instruments that can be used with a variety of populations. When contacting NRC/GT at UVA for information about identification instruments, be prepared to provide specific information about your school district and the populations you wish to assess.

The University of Virginia Research Site  
Dr. Carolyn M. Callahan, Associate Director  
Curry School of Education  
The University of Virginia  
405 Emmet Street  
Charlottesville, VA 22903  
804.924.0791

This file includes information about ability identification. Because of the volume of available information, alternative assessment as well as identification of minority groups and students with limited English proficiency are in separate FAQs on this Web site.

Following are links to related Internet resources, and Internet discussion groups, as well as selected citations from the ERIC database and the search terms we used to find the citations.

- [ERIC Digests \(http://ericec.org/digests/prodfly.html\)](http://ericec.org/digests/prodfly.html)

[E502: Developing Programs for Students of High Ability](#)

- [Internet Resources](http://ericec.org/faq/gt-urls.html) (<http://ericec.org/faq/gt-urls.html>)
- [Internet Discussion Groups](http://ericec.org/gifted.html) (<http://ericec.org/gifted.html>)

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You can search the ERIC database yourself on the Internet through either of the following web sites:

- [ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation \(ERIC AE\)](http://ericae.net/search.htm) (<http://ericae.net/search.htm>)
- [ERIC Clearinghouse on Information and Technology \(ERIC IT\)](http://ericir.syr.edu/Eric/) (<http://ericir.syr.edu/Eric/>).

### **ERIC Citations**

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- In microfiche collections worldwide; to find your nearest ERIC Resource Collection, point your web browser to: <http://ericae.net/derc.htm>.
- For a fee through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS): <http://edrs.com>, [service@edrs.com](mailto:service@edrs.com), or 1.800.443.ERIC.

The full text of citations beginning with an EJ number (for example, EJxxxxxx) is available for a fee from:

- The originating journal
- Through interlibrary loan services at your local college or public library
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  - *Infotrieve*: 800.422.4633; [www4.infotrieve.com](http://www4.infotrieve.com), [service@infotrieve.com](mailto:service@infotrieve.com)
  - *ingenta*: 800.296.2221; [www.ingenta.com](http://www.ingenta.com), [ushelp@ingenta.com](mailto:ushelp@ingenta.com)

### **ERIC Search Terms Used**

**gifted OR talent**

**AND**

**ability identification**

ED411244 TM026936

Multiple Intelligences and Assessment: A Collection of Articles.

Torff, Bruce, Ed.

1997; 226p.

ISBN: 1-57517-065-5

Available From: IRI/Skylight Training and Publishing, Inc., 2626 S.

Clearbrook Dr., Arlington Heights, IL 60005; 800-348-4474;

<http://www.iriskylight.com>

EDRS Price - MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.

Language: English

Document Type: BOOK (010); COLLECTION (020); EVALUATIVE  
REPORT (142)

Geographic Source: U.S.; Illinois

Journal Announcement: RIEJAN98

Since its introduction in 1983, Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences has attracted widespread interest among educators. The chapters in this book describe alternative assessments that capture the range of intelligences, allow the intelligences to be given more equal weight, use intelligence-fair formats, and focus on student performances in real-life contexts. Individual chapters are described in detail in the full abstract, available in the ERIC database.

Descriptors: Computer Assisted Testing; \*Educational Assessment; Elementary Secondary Education; Gifted; \*Intelligence; Intelligence Tests; \*Performance Based Assessment; \*Portfolio Assessment; Portfolios (Background Materials); Problem Solving; \*Test Construction; Test Use

Identifiers: \*Alternative Assessment; Authentic Assessment; Gardner (Howard); \*Multiple Intelligences

EJ550593 EC617044

Identifying Gifted Adolescents Using Personality Characteristics:  
Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities.

Ackerman, Cheryl M.

Roeper Review, v19 n4 p229-36 Jun 1997

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT  
(143)

Journal Announcement: CIJFEB98

This exploratory study of 79 high school students examined overexcitability assessment as a potential method for identifying giftedness. Overexcitability (an intensified way of experiencing the world) can occur in five areas: psychomotor, sensual, imaginal, intellectual, and emotional. The measure of overexcitability differentiated gifted and nongifted students, although 35% of nonidentified subjects had similar profiles to gifted subjects, suggesting potential giftedness.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; \*Gifted; \*Personality Traits;  
Psychological Characteristics; Psychological Patterns; Secondary  
Education; Student Characteristics  
Identifiers: \*Overexcitability

EJ550591 EC617042

Is Every Child Gifted?

Runco, Mark A.

Roeper Review, v19 n4 p220-24 Jun 1997

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); POSITION PAPER  
(120)

Journal Announcement: CIJFEB98

This article examines inclusive views of giftedness. It maintains that productivity requirements should be left out of definitions of giftedness since such requirements assume a gifted child has the expressive skills to support insights and that products can be accurately evaluated. Most important, the insistence on productivity ignores children with potential talent who need support, encouragement, and practice.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; \*Definitions; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Eligibility; \*Gifted; \*Productivity; Student Characteristics

EJ549128 EC616994

Varieties of Intellectual Talent.

Stanley, Julian C.

Journal of Creative Behavior, v31 n2 p93-119 2nd Qtr 1997

ISSN: 0022-0175

Language: English

Document Type: REVIEW LITERATURE (070); JOURNAL ARTICLE  
(080)

Journal Announcement: CIJJAN98

Discusses the different characteristics that are often lumped together under the multidimensional term "giftedness." The origins of the term, the contributions of individual psychologists and others in identifying gifted students, and the life outcomes of mathematically and/or verbally precocious youth identified by talent searches are examined.

Descriptors: Definitions; Elementary Secondary Education;  
\*Evaluation Methods; \*Gifted; Intelligence Differences; \*Student  
Characteristics; \*Student Evaluation; \*Talent; \*Talent Identification

EJ549048 EC616844

Bright, Tough, and Resilient -- and Not in a Gifted Program.

Peterson, Jean Sunde

Journal of Secondary Gifted Education, v8 n3 p121-36 Spr 1997

ISSN: 1077-4610

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); EVALUATIVE REPORT (142)

Journal Announcement: CIJJAN98

Qualitative analysis of language generated in structured interviews with 11 high-ability at-risk middle school children (who had not been identified for gifted programs) yielded information concerning personal difficulties, perceived support, familiarity with danger and violence, home environment, school experiences, perceptions of the future, and resilience. Implications for identification and programming are drawn.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Educational Environment; Family Environment; \*Gifted Disadvantaged; High Risk Students; Intermediate Grades; Interviews; Junior High Schools; Middle Schools; Qualitative Research; Student Attitudes; Student Characteristics; Student Experience; Violence

EJ552170 EC617395

Testing Times: Problems Arising from Misdiagnosis.

Vialle, Wilma; Konza, Deslea

Gifted Education International, v12 n1 p4-8 1997

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); POSITION PAPER (120)

Journal Announcement: CIJMAR98

Three case studies illustrate problems in the identification of gifted students when tests are not used appropriately. The paper concludes that testing must occur within the context of intensive observations of and discussions with the child and family. The importance of all teachers receiving training in gifted education is stressed.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Case Studies; \*Educational Diagnosis; Elementary Education; Family Involvement; \*Gifted; Observation; Student Evaluation; \*Teacher Education; Test Interpretation; \*Testing Problems

EJ547432 EC616880

An Analysis of Teacher Nominations and Student Performance in Gifted Programs.

Hunsaker, Scott L.; And Others

Gifted Child Quarterly, v41 n2 p19-24 Spr 1997

ISSN: 0016-9862

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143)

Journal Announcement: CIJDEC97

A study evaluated the relationship of teacher nomination instruments to later performance of 121 students from low-income backgrounds in

a gifted program. Results indicate nominations based on thinking abilities, general gifted behaviors, and special learning skills were related to later performance on creativity, group skills, and language abilities.

Descriptors: Academic Achievement; \*Creativity; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Evaluation Methods; \*Gifted Disadvantaged; Interpersonal Communication; Low Income Groups; \*Performance Factors; \*Special Programs; \*Talent Identification

EJ534115 EC614909

On the Nature of Giftedness and Talent: Imposing Order on Chaos.

Morelock, Martha J.

Roeper Review, v19 n1 p4-12 Sep 1996

ISSN: 0278-3193

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); POSITION PAPER (120)

Journal Announcement: CIJAPR97

Target Audience: Researchers

This article discusses theories on children's giftedness, including opposing movements in the gifted field--the Talent Development Movement and the Columbus Group Movement--which exemplify the "gifted achiever" and "gifted child" strands of research, theory, and practice. Vygotskian theory is suggested as a conceptual framework that can accommodate the multidimensionality of giftedness and talent.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Children; Educational Change; Educational History; Educational Research; \*Educational Theories; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted; Models; \*Talent; \*Talent Development; Theory Practice Relationship

EJ532420 EC614703

Identification, Instruction, and Assessment of Gifted Children: A Construct Validation of a Triarchic Model.

Sternberg, Robert J.; And Others

Gifted Child Quarterly, v40 n3 p129-37 Sum 1996

Theme issue: Programs and Practices for Talented Students.

ISSN: 0016-9862

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); PROJECT DESCRIPTION (141); RESEARCH REPORT (143)

Journal Announcement: CIJMAR97

This article presents a model for the identification, instruction, and assessment of gifted children. The rationale behind a unified model is outlined, and the use of the triarchic model in a variety of subject areas is described. A validation study using the model to teach high

school psychology is reported.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Academic Achievement;  
Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted; \*Models; Student  
Evaluation; \*Teaching Methods; Validity

Identifiers: \*Triarchic Theory of Intelligence (Sternberg)

EJ532416 EC614699

Multiple Intelligences, Problem Solving, and Diversity in the General  
Classroom.

Maker, C. June; And Others

Journal for the Education of the Gifted, v19 n4 p437-60 Sum 1996

Special issue: Effective Practices.

ISSN: 0162-3532

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT  
(143)

Journal Announcement: CIJMAR97

This study compared two teachers' levels of implementation of the  
DISCOVER approach to gifted education and the resulting effects on  
number of students identified as gifted and on problem-solving  
behaviors. Significant relationships were found between level of  
implementation and positive changes in mathematics problem solving  
and numbers of students identified as gifted on postassessment.

Descriptors: Ability Identification; Cognitive Processes; Elementary  
Education; \*Gifted; \*Mathematics Instruction; \*Outcomes of  
Education; \*Problem Solving; \*Teaching Methods

Identifiers: \*DISCOVER System; Diversity (Student); \*Multiple  
Intelligences

ED400650 EC305134

Special Educational Needs of Gifted and Talented Children.

Osborn, Julia

Long Island Jewish Medical Center, NY.

Youth Mental Health Update, v8 n4 May-Jun 1996 Jun 1996

7p.; Available From: Long Island Jewish Medical Center, Division of  
Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Schneider Children's Hospital, 269-  
01 76th Avenue, New Hyde Park, NY 11040.

EDRS Price - MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

Language: English

Document Type: SERIAL (022)

Geographic Source: U.S.; New York

Journal Announcement: RIEMAR97

This single-article issue discusses the identification and educational  
needs of gifted children. Giftedness is defined and a suggested set of  
levels of intellectual giftedness based on IQ scores is included. The  
special needs of gifted children are briefly reviewed, including: the

need for a challenging education, the need for "true peers" that share their interests and abilities and accept them, the need for responsive parenting, and the need for adult empathy. The report notes research that identifies low self-esteem in exceptionally gifted children and the risk of depression and social isolation. Recommendations are provided for the identification of and program planning for gifted children, such as fostering special experiences for gifted children based upon common abilities and interests rather than age. A continuing education quiz is offered.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Educational Strategies; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted; Intelligence Quotient; \*Student Characteristics; Student Needs

ED394783 RC020582

WISC-III Subtest Scatter Patterns for Rural Superior and High-Ability Children.

Fishkin, Anne S.; Kampsnider, John J.

Mar 1996

10p.; In: Rural Goals 2000: Building Programs That Work; see RC 020 545.

EDRS Price - MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

Language: English

Document Type: RESEARCH REPORT (143); CONFERENCE PAPER (150)

Geographic Source: U.S.; West Virginia

Journal Announcement: RIESEP96

Since the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Third Edition (WISC-III), was published in 1991, it has been reported that fewer students are qualifying for gifted programs that use the WISC-III as a criterion measure. WISC-III differs from the WISC-Revised (WISC-R) in having a greater emphasis on speed of response, which could "penalize" reflective gifted children. The WISC-III was administered to 141 rural West Virginia children aged 6-12.5 who had full-scale IQ scores above 114. The children were categorized according to level of IQ as bright (115-123), superior (124- 131), or gifted (132-148). Multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was used to compare the groups on subtest scores, verbal and performance IQ scores, and two of the four WISC-III factorial indices--verbal comprehension index (VCI) and perceptual organization index (POI). When adjusted for full-scale IQ as the covariate, analyses showed significant differences between the IQ groups for four subtests, for VCI and POI, and for untimed and speed-bonus groups of subtests. The bright group showed comparatively lower scores on subtests yielding bonus points for quick performance; this deficit was not observed for superior and gifted groups. Bright group scores were similar to those of the superior group for VCI, but well below the

superior group on POI. Although perceptual organization skills are important in advanced learning, it would appear that WISC-III does not measure these skills in gifted children, but instead measures the "speed" with which children organize perceptual materials.

Implications for identification and placement in gifted programs are discussed.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; \*Children; Elementary Education; Elementary School Students; \*Gifted; \*Intelligence Tests; \*Testing Problems; Test Validity; Timed Tests

Identifiers: \*Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children III

EJ505160 EC611481

Creativity and Giftedness: Published Instrument Uses and Abuses.

Hunsaker, Scott L.; Callahan, Carolyn M.

Gifted Child Quarterly, v39 n2 p110-14 Spr 1995

ISSN: 0016-9862

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143)

Journal Announcement: CIJOCT95

Instruments used to measure creativity by 418 school districts as part of their identification procedures for gifted programs were studied.

Results indicated that districts often select instruments for assessing creativity without attending to the definition of the construct. Creativity is often assessed in ways that may not be valid or reliable.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; \*Creativity; \*Creativity Tests; Definitions; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted; School Districts; \*Talent Identification; Test Reliability; \*Test Selection; Test Validity

EJ501402 EC611034

Temporal Stability of Gifted Children's Intelligence.

Spangler, Robert S.; Sabatino, David A.

Roeper Review, v17 n3 p207-10 Feb-Mar 1995

Theme Issue: The Psychology of the Gifted.

ISSN: 0278-3193

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143)

Journal Announcement: CIJAUG95

Target Audience: Researchers

The longitudinal stability of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised was examined for consistency in determining eligibility for gifted programs among 66 elementary children. All subtest scales except one remained extremely stable, producing less than one scale score point difference across three test

administrations. Children originally found eligible for gifted programs maintained their eligibility status over six years.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Elementary Education; Eligibility; \*Gifted; Intelligence Quotient; \*Intelligence Tests; Longitudinal Studies; Student Placement; \*Test Reliability

Identifiers: \*Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (Revised)

EJ499302 EC610665

A Qualitative Approach to Portfolios: The Early Assessment for Exceptional Potential Model.

Shaklee, Beverly D.; Viechnicki, Karen J.

Journal for the Education of the Gifted, v18 n2 p156-70 Win 1995

ISSN: 0162-3532

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); PROJECT DESCRIPTION (141)

Journal Announcement: CIJJUL95

The Early Assessment for Exceptional Potential portfolio assessment model assesses children as exceptional learners, users, generators, and pursuers of knowledge. It is based on use of authentic learning opportunities; interaction of assessment, curriculum, and instruction; multiple criteria derived from multiple sources; and systematic teacher preparation. The model's standards for credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are noted.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Early Childhood Education; Elementary Education; Evaluation Methods; \*Gifted; Models; \*Portfolio Assessment; \*Student Evaluation

Identifiers: \*Early Identification

EJ481555 EC608473

Assessing Artistic and Problem-Solving Performance in Minority and Nonminority Students Using a Nontraditional Multidimensional Approach.

Clasen, Donna Rae; And Others

Gifted Child Quarterly, v38 n1 p27-32 Win 1994

ISSN: 0016-9862

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143)

Journal Announcement: CIJAUG94

Target Audience: Researchers; Practitioners

This study investigated several nontraditional identification methodologies for their efficacy in identifying both minority and nonminority gifted students. Sixth graders (n=433) were given drawing and problem-solving tasks. Peer and teacher nominations were also used. The assessments identified a proportionate number

of minority and nonminority students with potential in art or problem solving.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Culture Fair Tests; Disadvantaged Youth; \*Freehand Drawing; \*Gifted; Interdisciplinary Approach; Intermediate Grades; \*Minority Groups; \*Problem Solving; \*Talent Identification

EJ470813 EC607057

Development of the Scale for the Evaluation of Gifted Identification Instruments (SEGII).

Callahan, Carolyn M.; And Others

Gifted Child Quarterly, v37 n3 p133-40 Sum 1993

ISSN: 0016-9862

Available From: UMI

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); EVALUATIVE REPORT (142)

Journal Announcement: CIJFEB94

Target Audience: Administrators; Researchers; Practitioners

This article describes the Scale for the Evaluation of Gifted Identification Instruments, developed for use by school decision makers. Development of the scale is reviewed in terms of five areas of assessment: validity, reliability, propriety, respondent appropriateness, and utility. Specific guidelines and cautions in using the scale are also provided.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; \*Gifted; Screening Tests; Test Reliability; \*Test Selection; Test Use; Test Validity

Identifiers: \*Scale for Evaluation Gifted Identification Instru; Test Evaluation

ED352785 EC301715

Developmental Approaches to Identifying Exceptional Ability.

Abstracts of Selected Papers from the Annual Esther Katz Rosen Symposium on Psychological Development of Gifted Children. (2nd, Lawrence, Kansas, February 28-29, 1992). Kansas Univ., Lawrence. Feb 1992

75p.

EDRS Price - MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.

Language: English

Document Type: BIBLIOGRAPHY (131)

Geographic Source: U.S.; Kansas

Journal Announcement: RIEMAY93

Target Audience: Researchers

This monograph presents extensive abstracts of 49 papers on developmental approaches to identifying exceptional ability. Sample topics include: the gifted population in prison; identification of gifted

rural children; use of the Stanford-Binet for identification; student characteristics and placement into special programs for the highly gifted; identification of culturally diverse students; longitudinal development of the intellectually gifted; cognitive style of gifted preschoolers; eidetic imagery; development of problem finding ability in gifted students; quantitative electrophysiology and behavior of gifted and talented children; identification of mathematically talented elementary students; the development of aesthetic experience; programs for underserved pupils; applying the theory of multiple intelligences; giftedness in the multi-age multi-ability primary school; and creativity tests and artistic talent.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; \*Child Development; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted; \*Talent; \*Talent Identification

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***ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education***

***<http://ericec.org>***

### **State Gifted Education Associations**

Retrieved from <http://www.nagc.org/state/statehome.htm>

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These associations are affiliates of NAGC and we recommend them as contact points for parents and teachers for specific state program, service, and legislative questions.

States wishing to have their association web sites linked on the NAGC site need to contact the National Office at (202) 785-4268.

NAGC has affiliates in every state and you can get information about them by calling the NAGC National Office. Contact NAGC's Webmaster if you want your state association web site to be listed here.

To obtain the current information from state associations, click on the following link:

<http://www.nagc.org/state/statewebsites.html>

## POSITION PAPERS

### Using Tests to Identify Gifted Students

Retrieved from <http://www.nagc.org>

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) periodically issues policy statements that deal with issues, policies, and practices that have an impact on the education of gifted and talented students. Policy statements represent the official convictions of the organization.

All policy statements approved by the NAGC Board of Directors are consistent with the organization's position that education in a democracy must respect the uniqueness of all individuals, the broad range of cultural diversity present in our society, and the similarities and differences in learning characteristics that can be found within any group of students.

Most school districts use some form of standardized achievement, intelligence, or creativity tests in the identification and screening process for gifted programs and services. When used properly and when selected with care, these instruments may provide valuable information about students' abilities, including their strengths and weaknesses. Tests are also valuable for assessing students' needs, and for designing programs and services based on these needs. Despite their potential usefulness, tests also have limitations. Testing instruments are not perfect or infallible predictors of intelligence, achievement, or ability and should be selected and used carefully. While critically important in all assessment, this precaution must be given even greater consideration when assessing underserved gifted students (i.e., young children, culturally diverse students, linguistically diverse students, economically disadvantaged students, and students with other special educational needs).

Given the limitations of all tests, *no single measure* should be used to make identification and placement decisions. That is, no single test or instrument should be used to include a child in or exclude a child from gifted education services. The most effective and equitable means of serving gifted students is to *assess* them - to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and to prescribe services based on these needs. Testing situations should not hinder students' performance. Students must feel comfortable, relaxed, and have a good rapport with the examiner. Best practices indicate that multiple measures and valid indicators from multiple sources must be used to assess and serve gifted students. Information should be gathered from multiple sources (caregivers/families, teachers, students, and others with significant knowledge of the students), in different ways (e.g., observations, performances, products, portfolios, interviews), and in different contexts (e.g., in-school and out-of-school settings).

Any school personnel who administer, use, or advise others in the use of standardized tests should be qualified to do so. They should:

1. Understand measurement principles, including how to evaluate the test's technical claims (e.g., validity and reliability)
2. Know about the particular test used, its appropriate uses, and its limitations, including possible consequences resulting from scores;
3. Administer, score, and interpret results in a professional and responsible manner;
4. Employ procedures necessary to reduce or eliminate bias in test selection,

- administration, and interpretation;
5. Understand the influence of cultural diversity, linguistic diversity, and socioeconomic disadvantages on test performance; and
  6. Weigh the results of tests carefully with other information.

NAGC advocates that all school personnel continue to explore, adapt, and evaluate comprehensive assessment alternatives to ensure that all gifted students are given an equal opportunity to develop their potential.  
(Approved 7/97).

### **Ability Grouping**

The practice of grouping, enabling students with advanced abilities and/or performance to be grouped together to receive appropriately challenging instruction, has recently come under attack. NAGC wishes to reaffirm the importance of grouping for instruction of gifted students. Grouping allows for more appropriate, rapid, and advanced instruction, which matches the rapidly developing skills and capabilities of gifted students.

Special attention should be given to the identification of gifted and talented students who may not be identified through traditional assessment methods (including economically disadvantaged individuals, individuals of limited English proficiency, and individuals with handicaps), to help them participate effectively in special grouping programs.

Strong research evidence supports the effectiveness of ability grouping for gifted students in accelerated classes, enrichment programs, advanced placement programs, etc. Ability and performance grouping has been used extensively in programs for musically and artistically gifted students, and for athletically talented students with little argument. Grouping is a necessary component of every graduate and professional preparation program, such as law, medicine, and the sciences. It is an accepted practice that is used extensively in the education programs in almost every country in the western world.

NAGC does not endorse a tracking system that sorts all children into fixed layers in the school system with little attention to particular content, student motivation, past accomplishment, or present potential.

To abandon the proven instructional strategy of grouping students for instruction at a time of educational crisis in the U.S. will further damage our already poor competitive position with the rest of the world, and will renege on our promise to provide an appropriate education for all children. (Approved 11/91)

To obtain copies of these position papers, contact the National Office at (202) 785-4268.

## State definitions for the gifted and talented revisited

Stephens, K. R., & Karnes, F. A. (Winter 2000). *State definitions for the gifted and talented revisited*. *Exceptional Children* 66(2), 219-238.

### Abstract:

**Definitions of gifted and talented students have been in a state of evolution for some time. Many states rely on the federal interpretation as a guideline for establishing their definitions relating to gifted education.**

### Full Text:

Copyright Council for Exceptional Children Winter 2000

ABSTRACT: Definitions of gifted and talented students have been in a state of evolution for some time. Many states rely on the federal interpretation as a guideline for establishing their definitions relating to gifted education. However, the federal definition has gone through a series of metamorphoses with the addition and deletion of various terms and components. This article presents a brief history of the transition of the federal definition for students who are gifted and talented, as well as a description of other definitions that have impacted state definitions. An overview of state definitions in 1990 and 1998 is also presented and analyzed.

Over the years, additions and deletions of terminology and categories have transformed the federal definitions. The terms "giftedness and gifted" have been considered obsolete at times as educators and legislators try to shed the elitist attitudes and stereotypes associated with these terms. Regardless, the importance of having a strong and suitable definition is evident in part because limited funding is available for educational programs, and a description of the characteristics and needs of these extraordinary students is mandatory to ensure that they receive appropriate educational experiences. This article provides a historical overview of federal definitions for the gifted and presents each state's past and current definitions to assist state consultants, teachers, state legislators, boards of education, school administrators, parents, policymakers, and other concerned citizens in making informed decisions regarding the appropriate education for gifted students.

### THE FEDERAL DEFINITION

The federal definition of "gifted and talented students" has progressed through several transitions over the years, serving as a guide for states as they develop their definitions and policies regarding gifted education. One of the first federal definitions for gifted and talented students appeared in The Education Amendments of 1969 (U.S. Congress, 1970) which stated:

The term 'gifted and talented children' means in accordance with objective criteria prescribed by the Commissioner, children who have outstanding intellectual ability or

creative talent, the development of which requires special activities or services not ordinarily provided by local education agencies.

In 1972, Sidney Marland, then Commissioner of Education, modified the above definition to:

Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contributions to self and society.

Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated and/or potential ability in any of the following areas, singly or in combination:

General intellectual ability

Specific academic aptitude

Creative or productive thinking

Leadership ability

Ability in the visual or performing arts

Psychomotor ability (Marland, 1972, p.5)

In 1978, the Marland definition, as the 1972 definition came to be called, was modified once again to:

The term "gifted and talented children" means children and, whenever applicable, youth, who are identified at the preschool, elementary, or secondary level as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, specific academic or leadership ability or in the performing and visual arts and who by reason thereof require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school. (Purcell, 1978, P. L. 95-561, Title IX, sec. 902)

This 1978 modification saw the exclusion of psychomotor ability as a category of giftedness. Furthermore, the term "preschool" was added along with "youth" to include young children and adolescents.

Senator Bill Bradley, a Democrat from New Jersey, introduced the Jacob IC Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act of 1988 (U.S. Congress, 1988) which modified the federal definition once again to:

The term "gifted and talented" student means children and youth who give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic or leadership capacity,

or in specific academic fields, and who require special services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities. (PL 100-297, Title IV, Sec. 4103)

The Javits definition eliminated any reference to the performing arts. Also excluded was specific mention of preschool, elementary, and secondary levels of education.

In 1994, with the release of the U.S. Department of Education report, *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent*, another new definition evolved based on the definition used in the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act. This new definition reflects current knowledge and thinking towards our talented youth:

Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.

These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools.

Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor. (P. 26)

This new definition eliminates the term "gifted" which presently insinuates a formed and finished ability rather than a developing one. Recent research has found that many students are not demonstrating their full potential due to environmental influences. The National Excellence definition recognizes that potential talent is present across all realms of society.

## OTHER DEFINITIONS AND THEORIES

American psychologist Lewis Terman was the first to use the term "gifted." Terman defined giftedness as the top 1% level in general intelligence ability as measured by the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale or a comparable instrument (1925). Later in 1957, DeHaan and Havighurst listed several talents which they associated with giftedness, including intellectual ability, creative thinking, scientific ability, social leadership, mechanical or craft skills, and talent in the fine arts. In addition, they acknowledged two levels of giftedness: the extremely gifted child (top 1%) and the solid, superior child (top 10%).

Others who have defined giftedness include Abraham Tannenbaum (1983, 1997), Joseph Renzulli (1978), John Feldhusen (1992), Francoys Gagne (1990, 1995, 1998), Barbara Clark (1997), J. A. Borland (1989), and Jane Piirto (1994). Their insights and contributions follow.

Tannenbaum's (1983) definition of giftedness embodies five factors: (a) a sliding scale of general intelligence, (b) special ability, (c) nonintellective factors, (d) environmental factors, and (e) chance factors. He went on to describe gifted children as those with "potential for becoming critically acclaimed performers or exemplary producers of ideas in spheres of activity that enhance the moral, physical, emotional, social, intellectual, or aesthetic life of humanity" (1997, p. 27). Renzulli's (1978) three-ring conception of giftedness incorporates the traits of task commitment, above average ability, and creativity. He further states that "Individuals capable of developing gifted behavior are those possessing or capable of developing this composite set of traits and applying them to any potentially valuable area of human performance" (p. 184).

Feldhusen (1992) focuses on recognizing high levels of talent or precocity in an area of human endeavor in children. These areas or domains of talent include: academic/intellectual, artistic, vocational/technical, and interpersonal/social.

Gagne (1990) specified five general fields of talent in which gifted students have the aptitude to achieve: (a) academic, (b) technical, (c) artistic, (d) interpersonal, and (e) athletic. In addition, Gagne (1998) proposed a system of categories to divide gifted and talented populations into five levels: (a) mild, (b) moderate, (c) high, (d) exceptional, and (e) extreme. He defines giftedness as the following:

The possession and use of untrained and spontaneously expressed natural abilities (called aptitudes or gifts) in at least one ability domain to a degree that places the child or adult at least among the top 15% of his or her peers. (Gagne, 1995, p. 106)

Barbara Clark's definition of giftedness incorporates theories involving current brain research, which theorizes that gifted children process information differently than their nongifted peers. Her definition is as follows:

Giftedness is a biologically rooted concept that serves as a label for a high level of intelligence and indicates an advanced and accelerated development of functions within the brain, including physical sensing, emotion, cognition, and intuition. Such advanced and accelerated functions may be expressed through abilities such as those involved in cognition, creativity, academic aptitude, leadership, or the visual or performing arts. (1997, p. 26)

Borland's (1989) definition is written to justify appropriate educational programming for gifted students based on educational need rather than for the purpose of producing productive adults for the good of society. He defines giftedness as:

Those students in a given school or school district who are exceptional by virtue of markedly greater than average potential or ability in some area of human activity generally considered to be the province of the educational system and whose exceptionality

engenders special-education needs that are not being met adequately by the regular core curriculum. (p. 33)

Piirto (1994) outlines three areas in her pyramid of talent development that are necessary for the realization of superior talent. These include: (a) the presence of certain personality attributes, (b) a minimum IQ threshold, and (c) a particular talent in a specific domain. She believes all of these areas are directly influenced by environment and heredity. In addition, Piirto defines the gifted as:

Those individuals who, by way of learning characteristics such as superior memory, observational powers, curiosity, creativity, and the ability to learn school-related subject matters rapidly and accurately with a minimum of drill and repetition, have a right to an education that is differentiated according to those characteristics .... They may or may not become producers of knowledge or makers of novelty .... These children can be found in all socioeconomic and ethnic groups...These children have no greater obligation than any other children to be future leaders or world class geniuses. (p. 34)

The theories of intelligence introduced by Robert Sternberg (1985) and Howard Gardner (1983) also have contributed to the perception of giftedness. Sternberg's Triarchic Theory of intellectual giftedness focuses on three main dimensions which include: information processing through internal representation of objects and symbols, information processing based on past experiences, and adapting to real-world environments. Gardner's multiple intelligences theory is becoming increasingly popular. The theory began with seven known intelligences (linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, spatial, and bodily-kinesthetic) but has expanded to include others (naturalistic, emotional). The theory is grounded in the belief that talent can exist across many areas and fields, and is not restricted to core academic areas.

All of these researchers and theorists have helped contribute to our perception of intelligence and giftedness. Through their insight, our understanding and views of gifts and talents have been broadened.

### Review of Past Studies

In 1977, Karnes and Collins reported that 24 states were using the exact or a modified version of the 1972 federal definition of the gifted and talented. A follow-up study in 1983 (Karnes and Koch, 1985) revealed that only one state was using the federal definition of 1972; nine states were exactly following or using a modified version of the 1978 federal definition; two states were using a modified version of Renzulli's definition; and

38 states had developed unique definitions. In 1990, Cassidy and Hossler (1992) found that most states use the exact or modified version of the federal definition.

### METHOD

A survey was conducted in the spring of 1998 to determine each state's definition of gifted and talented students and was sent to each person responsible for gifted and talented education in every state department of education. An additional request was forwarded 2 weeks later to those states who did not respond initially. Several were contacted by phone, fax, or e-mail to obtain the definition or verify information. The definitions were then analyzed according to the terminology used to describe students, the areas of giftedness addressed (Table 1), and any other components specified. Each state's definition as reported in 1990 by Cassidy and Hossler (1992) is listed below, followed by the definition or status of the definition reported in 1998.

## RESULTS

A total of 29 states have modified their definitions of gifted and talented since the 1990 survey. For example, Colorado has returned to the federal definition of 1972. Florida, Michigan, and North Carolina now specify underrepresented groups within their new definitions. Other states have changed their definitions to include additional areas of giftedness. For example, Georgia expanded their definition beyond general intellectual ability to include creative, artistic, leadership, and specific academic areas. Idaho added leadership; Mississippi added artistically and creatively gifted; New Mexico added academically gifted; North Carolina added intellectually gifted; Rhode Island added industrial arts and leadership; and Tennessee added academically gifted. In contrast, Nevada has narrowed their definition to one area of giftedness; Texas has dropped psychomotor; Virginia has deleted psychosocial ability; and Wyoming has eliminated mention of the specific categories of giftedness in their definition. According to their response, other states (Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Vermont) have modified their definitions slightly through a variation in wording. Kansas has eliminated their definition specific to gifted and talented children and now includes these students under their definition for exceptional children. Minnesota, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and South Dakota report no longer having a state definition for the gifted.

## STATE DEFINITIONS OF GIFTED STUDENTS

### Alabama

1990: "Intellectually Gifted" students are those children and youth who are identified as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities for highly refined cognitive functioning (including creative or productive thinking) and who by reason thereof require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school.

| Area                      | 80 | 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 00 |   |
|---------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| Special Abilities         | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Specific Academic         | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Cognitive/Verbal Ability  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Leadership                | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Visual and Technical Arts | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Unusual                   | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Physical Arts             | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Performance               | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Task Completion           | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Information               | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Advanced Learning Ability | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Disseminated Achievements | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| High Performance          | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Critical Thinking         | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Empirical Evidence        | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |
| Advanced Potential        | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * |

Enlarge 200%  
Enlarge 400%

TABLE 1

| Area                      | 01 | 02 | 03 | 04 | 05 | 06 | 07 | 08 | 09 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |   |   |
|---------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|
| Special Abilities         | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Specific Academic         | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Cognitive/Verbal Ability  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Leadership                | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Visual and Technical Arts | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Unusual                   | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Physical Arts             | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Performance               | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Task Completion           | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Information               | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Advanced Learning Ability | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Disseminated Achievements | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| High Performance          | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Critical Thinking         | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Empirical Evidence        | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |
| Advanced Potential        | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | *  | * | * |

Enlarge 200%  
Enlarge 400%

TABLE 1

1998: Same as 1990, but currently in process of changing their regulations at the time of this survey.

Alaska

1990: To be eligible for special education and related services as a gifted child, a child must:

(1) exhibit outstanding intellect, ability, or creative talent as determined by the district under (m) of this section

(2) require special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's educational program effective; and

(3) be certified by a multidisciplinary team as qualifying for and needing special education services for the gifted.(m) Each district shall establish written criteria for identifying children having outstanding intellect, ability, or creative talent within the meaning of AS 14.30.350.

1998: Same as 1990.

#### Arizona

1990: "Gifted child" means a child of lawful school age who due to superior intellect, advanced learning ability, or both, is not afforded an opportunity for otherwise attainable progress and development in regular classroom instruction and who needs special instruction, special ancillary services, or both, to achieve at levels commensurate with his intellect and ability. 1998: Same as 1990.

#### Arkansas

1990: Gifted and talented children and youth are those of high potential or ability whose learning characteristics and educational needs require qualitatively differentiated educational experiences or services. Possession of these talents and gifts, or potential for their development, will be evidenced through interaction of above average intellectual ability, task commitment or motivation, and creative ability.

1998: Same as 1990.

#### California

1990: "Gifted and talented pupil" means a pupil enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school of this state who is identified as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability as defined pursuant to sec 52202.

sec 52202. The demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability shall be defined by each school district governing board in accordance with regulations established by the State Board of Education. Each district shall use one or more of the following categories in defining such capability: intellectual, creative, specific academic, or leadership ability; high achievement; performing and visual arts talent; or any other criterion which meets the standards set forth by the State Board of Education pursuant to sec 52203. Each governing board shall also consider identifying as gifted or talented any pupil who has transferred from a district in which he or she was identified as a gifted and talented pupil.

1998: Same as 1990.

### Colorado

1990: "Gifted and Talented Children" means those students whose performance or the assessed potential for such performance is so outstanding that they require differentiated programming to meet their educational needs. Such performance or the potential for such performance may be demonstrated through one or a combination of the following:

- \* Outstanding accomplishment(s) within one or more areas of the school curricula; or
- \* Outstanding reasoning, problem solving abilities, leadership skills, visual and performing arts, or creative, productive thinking abilities.

1998: "Gifted and talented children" means persons between the ages of 5 and 21 whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational needs. Children under 5 who fit this definition may also be served. Gifted and talented children hereinafter are referred to as students. Gifted and talented students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these areas:

- (a) General or specific intellectual ability.
- (b) Specific academic aptitude.
- (c) Creative or productive thinking.
- (d) Leadership and human relations abilities.
- (e) Visual arts, performing arts, spatial or musical abilities.
- (f) Psychomotor abilities.

### Connecticut

1990: "Extraordinary learning ability" means a child identified by the planning and placement team as gifted and talented on the basis of either performance on relevant standardized measuring instruments, or demonstrated or potential achievement or intellectual creativity, or both. The term shall refer to the top 5% of children so identified.

"Gifted and talented" means a child identified by the planning and placement team as (a) possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of very superior intellectual, creative, or specific academic capability, and (b) needing differentiated instruction or services beyond those being provided in the regular school program in order to realize their intellectual, creative, or specific academic potential. The term shall include

children with extraordinary learning ability and children with outstanding talent in the creative arts as defined by these regulations.

"Outstanding talent in the creative arts" means a child identified by the planning and placement team as gifted and talented on the basis of demonstrated or potential achievement in music, the visual arts, or the performing arts. The term shall refer to the top 5% of children so identified.

1998: Same as 1990.

#### Delaware

1990: Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society.

Children of high performance include those with demonstrated or potential ability in any one of the following areas, singly or in combination:

- \* General intellectual ability.
- \* Specific academic aptitude.
- \* Creative or productive thinking.
- \* Leadership ability.
- \* Ability in the visual or performing arts.
- \* Psychomotor ability.

1998: Same as 1990

#### Florida

1990: One who has superior intellectual development and is capable of high performance. The mental development of a gifted student is two (2) standard deviations or more above the mean. 1998: (1) Gifted-One who has superior intellectual development and is capable of high performance. (2) Criteria for eligibility-A student is eligible for special instructional programs for the gifted if the student meets criteria under paragraph (2) (a) or (b) of this rule.

(a) The student demonstrates:

1. Need for a special program,

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2. A majority of characteristics of gifted students according to a standard scale or checklist, and

3. Superior intellectual development as measured by an intelligence quotient of two (2) standard deviations or more above the mean on an individually administered standardized test of intelligence.

(b) The student is a member of an under-represented group and meets the criteria specified in an approved school district plan for increasing the participation of under-represented groups in programs for gifted students.

1. For the purpose of this rule, under-represented groups are defined as groups:

a. Whose racial/ethnic backgrounds are other than white non-Hispanic, or

b. Who are limited English proficient, or

c. Who are from a low socioeconomic status family.

#### Georgia

1990: The gifted student is one who demonstrates a high degree of general intellectual ability and who needs special instruction or special ancillary services in order to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her ability@ Eligibility criteria are 99th percentile on Mental Ability and 85th percentile composite or 90th percentile total reading, including reading comprehension, or total math for Grades 3 - 12.

1998: The gifted student is one who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual, creative, or artistic ability(ies), possesses exceptional leadership skills, or excels in specific academic fields and who needs special instruction or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities.

#### Hawaii

1990: Children and youth whose superior performance or potential indicates possible giftedness. This performance or potential may occur in any of the following general areas, singly or in combination: intellectual, creative, or specific academic abilities, leadership capability, psychomotor ability, or talent in the performing and visual arts.

1998: "Gifted students" means students with test scores or performances substantially and consistently above average and who also meet other multiple identification and selection criteria of the school.

Students who participate in programs for the gifted and talented shall meet the following two criteria:

(1) Demonstrate, or show potential for, superior achievement through available assessment instruments, observations, and rating scales in one of the following areas of giftedness and talent:

- (a) Intellectual Ability
- (b) Specific Academic Ability;
- (c) Creative Ability;
- (d) Leadership Capability;
- (e) Psychomotor Ability;
- (f) Performing and visual arts ability; and

(2) Meet the standards and requirements of the school's gifted and talented programs through additional factors and measures.

#### Idaho

1990: The term gifted/talented refers to those students who are identified as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability in intellectual, creative, specific academic areas, or ability in the performing and visual arts.

1998: "Gifted and talented children" means those students who are identified as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performing capabilities in intellectual, creative, specific academic, or leadership areas, or ability in the performing and visual arts and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities.

#### Illinois

1990: "Gifted children" and "Talented children" means children whose mental development is accelerated beyond the average or who have demonstrated a specific aptitude or talent and can profit from specially planned educational services to the extent they need them. The term includes children with exceptional ability in academic subjects, high level thought processes, divergent thinking, creativity, and the arts.

1998: "Gifted and Talented Children" means those children who consistently excel or show the potential to be consistently superior in one or more of the following areas of human endeavor: General Intellectual Ability. The child possesses general intellectual ability, high level thought processes (e.g., the ability to make valid generalizations about events, people, and things), or divergent thinking (e.g., the ability to identify and consider multiple, valid solutions to a given problem) which is consistently superior to that of other children to the extent that he or she needs and can profit from specialty planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school program.

**Specific Aptitude/Talent.** The child possesses specific aptitude/talent in a specific academic area, creativity, or the arts which is consistently superior to the aptitudes of other children to the extent that he or she needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program.

#### Indiana

1990: "Gifted and talented child" means a child, including a preschool child, who requires services and educational experiences not ordinarily offered in the regular school curriculum to develop demonstrated or potential aptitude, leadership, and creativity in either of the following areas: 1) Intellectual/academic, as evidenced by a superior aptitude for understanding facts, concepts, generalizations, and their relationships; reasoning; and developing and evaluating ideas as they relate to a specific discipline; 2) visual or performing arts, as evidenced by a superior aptitude for demonstrating, through exhibition or performance, aesthetic, critical, historical, and production aspects of dance, music, theater, or the visual arts; and understanding the arts, including knowledge, skills, generalizations, and their relationships.

1998: Same as 1990.

#### Iowa

1990: "Gifted and talented children" are those identified as possessing outstanding abilities who are capable of high performance. Gifted and talented children are children who require appropriate instruction and educational services commensurate with their abilities and needs beyond those provided by the regular school program. Gifted and talented children include those children with demonstrated achievement or potential ability, or both, in any of the following areas or in combination: general intellectual ability, creative thinking, leadership ability, visual and performing arts ability, and specific aptitude ability.

1998: Same as 1990.

#### Kansas

1990: Intellectually gifted children and youth are those who have potential for outstanding performance by virtue of superior intellectual abilities. Intellectually gifted means outstanding performance or potential for outstanding performance by virtue of superior intellectual abilities. Both those with demonstrated achievement and those with minimal or low performance who have evidence of high potential in general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitudes, or creative thinking abilities are included in this definition.

1998: Exceptional children means those who differ in physical, mental, social, emotional, or educational characteristics to the extent that special education services are necessary to enable them to receive educational benefits in accordance with their abilities or capacities. [K.S.A. 72-962(f)(2)] Included in this definition are those children who meet one or more of the following criteria and need special education services: (1) children who have autism, mental retardation, specific learning disabilities, hearing impairments, language

impairments, speech impairments, behavior disorders, physical impairments, other health impairments, severe multiple disabilities, deaf-blindness, traumatic brain injury, or visual impairments; (2) children eligible for early childhood special education services; and (3) children who are gifted. (K.A.R. 91-12-22)

#### Kentucky

1990: A gifted student is a student identified as possessing demonstrated or potential ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in general intellectual aptitude, specific academic aptitude, creative or divergent thinking, psychosocial or leadership skills, or in the visual or performing arts.

1998: Same as 1990, except "gifted student" is changed to "exceptional student."

#### Louisiana

1990: Gifted children possess demonstrated abilities that give evidence of high performance in academic and intellectual aptitudes. (Measure intelligence quotient [IQ] and academic achievement, not creativity@) Talented children possess measurable abilities that give clear evidence of unique talent in visual or performing arts, or both.

1998: Same as 1990.

#### Maine

1990: "Gifted and talented children" shall mean those children in grades K-12 who excel, or have the potential to excel, beyond their age peers, in the regular school program, to the extent that they need and can benefit from programs for the gifted and talented. Gifted and talented children shall receive specialized instruction through these programs if they have exceptional ability, aptitude, skill, or creativity in one or more of the following categories: (a) general intellectual ability as shown by demonstrated significant achievement or potential for significant accomplishment above their age peers in all academic areas; (b) specific academic aptitude as shown by demonstrated significant achievement or potential for significant accomplishment above their age peers in one or more academic area(s), or (c) artistic ability as shown by demonstrated significant achievement or potential for significant accomplishment above their age peers in the literary, performing, or visual arts.

1998: Same as 1990.

#### Maryland

1990: "Gifted and talented child" means an elementary or secondary student who is identified by professionally qualified individuals as having outstanding abilities in the area of- (a) general intellectual capabilities; (b) specific academic aptitudes; or (c) the creative, visual or performing arts. Gifted and talented students need different services in addition to those normally provided by the regular school program in order to develop their potential. A

gifted and talented child needs different services beyond those normally provided by the regular school programs in order to develop his potential.

1998: Same as 1990 except the last sentence is changed to: "Gifted and talented students need different services in addition to those normally provided by the regular school program in order to develop their potential."

#### Massachusetts

1990: Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contributions to self and society. Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement or potential ability in any of the following areas, singly or in combination: general intellectual ability; specific academic aptitude; creative or productive thinking; leadership ability; visual and performing arts; and psychomotor ability.

1998: No state definition was reported. Each school district establishes its own definition about what constitutes a gifted and talented student. The federal definition is used as a guide.

#### Michigan

1990: "Gifted and talented children" means children and, whenever applicable, youth, who are identified at the preschool, elementary, or secondary level as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, specific academic, or leadership ability or in the performing or visual arts and who by reason thereof require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school.

1998: Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.

These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools.

Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

#### Minnesota

1990: Gifted and talented children are those who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children whose potentialities can be realized through differentiated educational programs or services beyond those normally provided by

the regular school program. Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement or potential ability in any of the following areas, singly or in combination: general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, creative or productive thinking, leadership ability, and visual and performing arts.

1998: Minnesota has no definition for gifted and talented in law/statute. The 1990 definition was written in 1976 by the State Board of Education. While this definition is not a law or rule, it serves as a guide. The state board has not revisited the definition since 1976, and it is not on their work plan for this year to do so.

#### Mississippi

1990: Gifted children means children and youth who are found to have an exceptionally high degree of intellect or academic talent.

1998: "Intellectually Gifted Children" shall mean those children and youth who are found to have an exceptionally high degree of intelligence as documented through the identification process.

"Academically Gifted Children" shall mean those children and youth who are found to have an exceptionally high degree of demonstrated academic ability as documented through the identification process.

"Artistically Gifted Children" shall mean those children and youth who are found to have an exceptionally high degree of creativity and an exceptionally high degree of ability in visual arts as documented through the identification process.

"Creatively Gifted Children" shall mean those children and youth who are found to have an exceptionally high degree of creativity and exceptionally high degree of ability in the performing arts (music, drama, or dance) as documented through the identification process.

#### Missouri

1990: The gifted are those children who exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and learning potential as determined by competent professional evaluation to the extent that continued educational growth and stimulation could best be served by an academic environment beyond that offered through a standard grade level curriculum.

1998: Same as 1990.

#### Montana

1990: "Gifted and talented children" means children of outstanding abilities who are capable of high performance and require differentiated educational programs beyond those normally offered in public schools, in order to realize their contribution to self and society

The children so identified include those with demonstrated achievement or potential ability in a variety of worthwhile human endeavors.

1998: Same as 1990.

#### Nebraska

1990: "Gifted children@" shall mean children who excel markedly in ability to think, reason, judge, invent, or create and who need special facilities and services in order to assist them to achieve more nearly their potentials for their own sakes as individuals and for the increased contributions they may make to community, state, and nation.

1998: "Learner with high ability" means a student who gives evidence of high performance capability in such areas as intellectual, creative, or artistic capacity or in specific academic fields and who requires services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to develop those capabilities fully.

#### Nevada

1990: Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society.

Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated or potential ability in any of the following areas, singly or in combination:

- \* General intellectual ability
- \* Specific academic aptitude
- \* Creative or productive thinking
- \* Leadership ability
- \* Ability in the visual or performing arts
- \* Kinesthetic ability

1998: "Gifted and Talented Pupil" means a person under the age of 18 years who demonstrates such outstanding academic skills or aptitudes that he cannot progress effectively in a regular school program and therefore needs special instruction or special services.

#### New Hampshire

1990: Gifted and talented children are those with outstanding abilities who are capable of excellence. These are students who require differentiated educational programs or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school curriculum. These students include those with demonstrated achievement and or potential ability in any of the following areas, singly or in combination: (a) general intellectual ability; (b) specific academic aptitude; (c) creative or productive thinking; (d) leadership ability; (e) visual and performing arts.

1998: No definition was developed. The 1990 definition is the federal definition.

#### New Jersey

1990: "Gifted" means a pupil who has demonstrated or is capable of exceptional performance, accelerated comprehension and assimilation of content, exceptional capacity for abstract, and creative and divergent thinking in academic or out-of-school activities, and who requires a differentiated educational program beyond that normally provided by the school district.

1998: There are presently no guidelines for gifted education at the state level in New Jersey. It is at the discretion of each school district.

#### New Mexico

1990: "Gifted Child" means a school-age person whose measured intelligence quotient, either verbal or non-verbal, measures at least 2 standard deviations above the mean on an intelligence test approved by the State Board and who meet at least one of the following additional criteria: (a) score of at least the ninety-fifth percentile and above of the total battery score on a standardized achievement test approved by the State Board; (b) outstanding creativity or divergent thinking as indicated by a test score at or above 1.5 standard deviations from the mean, above the 96th percentile, or three grade placements above the student's age-grade placement (depending on the test data reporting system of the publisher or data from observation of the child or reports from qualified individuals knowledgeable about the child's performance) should supplement the test findings; or (c) outstanding critical thinking or problem-solving ability as defined in the manner established by the test author based on the normative data available on test instrument.

1998: "Children who are gifted" means school-age children whose intellectual ability paired with subject matter aptitude/achievement, creative/divergent thinking, or problems solving/critical thinking is so outstanding that special education services are required to meet their educational needs.

"Intellectual ability" means performance in the very superior range as defined by the test author on an individually administered intelligence measure.

"Subject Matter Aptitude/Achievement" means superior academic performance (a) on a total subject area score on a standardized measure or (b) as documented by information from other sources as specified in 14.2.1 of these rules.

"Creativity/Divergent Thinking" means outstanding performance (a) on a test of creativity/divergent thinking or (b) in creativity/divergent thinking as documented by information from other sources as specified in 14.2.1 of these rules.

"Problem--Solving/Critical Thinking" means outstanding performance (a) on a test of problem-solving/critical thinking or (b) in problem-solving/critical thinking as documented by information from other sources as specified in 14.2.1 of these rules.

#### New York

1990. Those pupils who show evidence of high performance capability and exceptional potential in areas such as general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude and outstanding ability in visual and performing arts. Such definition shall include those pupils who require educational programs or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their full potential.

1998: Same as 1990.

#### North Carolina

1990: Academically gifted students are defined as those who demonstrate or have potential to demonstrate outstanding intellectual aptitude and specific academic ability. In order to develop their abilities, these students may require differentiated educational services beyond those ordinarily provided by the regular school program. 1998: Academically or intellectually gifted students perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment, Academically or intellectually gifted students exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas, specific academic fields, or both intellectual areas and specific fields. Academically or intellectually gifted students require differentiated education services beyond those ordinarily provided by the regular educational program. Outstanding abilities are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavors.

#### North Dakota

1990: "Gifted child" means a gifted and talented child who is identified by professional, qualified persons, who, by virtue of outstanding abilities, is capable of high performance and who requires differentiated educational programs and services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize his contribution to self and society.

1998: Same as 1990 except "his contribution to self and society" is changed to "his or her contribution to self and society."

#### Ohio

1990: Any child who meets the following requirements shall be determined to be a gifted child and shall be eligible for programs established by school district... is superior in one or more of the following types of ability: (a) superior cognitive ability; (b) specific academic ability; (C) creative thinking ability; and (d) visual or performing arts ability.

1998: Same as 1990.

## Oklahoma

1990: "Gifted and talented children" means those children identified at the preschool, elementary, and secondary level as having demonstrated potential abilities of high performance capability and needing differentiated education or service beyond those being provided by the regular school program. Capability areas will include but will not be limited to the following: (a) intellectual ability, (b) creative thinking, (c) leadership ability, (d) visual and performing arts ability, and (e) specific ability aptitude.

"Gifted children" means those boys and girls identified in Grades I through 12 as having demonstrated potential abilities of high performance capability and needing differentiated or accelerated educational services

1998: "Gifted and talented children" means those children identified at the preschool, elementary, and secondary level as having demonstrated potential abilities of high performance capability and needing differentiated or accelerated education or services. For the purpose of this definition, "demonstrated abilities of high performance capability" means those identified students who score in the top 3% on any national standardized test of intellectual ability. Said definition may also include those students who excel in one or more of the following areas: (a) creative thinking ability, (b) leadership ability, (c) visual and performing arts ability, and (d) specific academic ability. A school district shall identify children in capability areas by means of a multicriteria evaluation. With first and second grade level children, a local school district may utilize evaluation mechanisms such as, but not limited to, teacher referrals in lieu of standardized testing measures.

"Gifted children" means those boys and girls identified in Grades I through 12 as having demonstrated potential abilities of high performance capability and needing differentiated or accelerated educational services.

## Oregon

1990: "Talented and gifted children" means those children who require special educational programs of services, or both, beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society and who demonstrate outstanding ability or potential in one or more of the following areas: (a) general intellectual ability as commonly measured by measures of intelligence and aptitude, (b) unusual academic ability in one or more academic areas, (c) creative ability in using original or nontraditional methods in thinking and producing, (d) leadership ability in motivating the performance of others either in educational or noneducational settings, and (e) ability in the visual or performing arts, such as dance, music, or art.

1998: Same as 1990.

### Pennsylvania

1990: "Mentally gifted" is defined as outstanding intellectual and creative ability, the development of which requires special services and programs not ordinarily provided in the regular education program. This term includes a person who has an IQ of 130 or higher and when multiple criteria as set forth in Department Guidelines indicate gifted ability. Determination of gifted ability will not be based on IQ score alone. A person with an IQ score lower than 130 may be admitted to gifted programs when other educational criteria in the profile of the person strongly indicate gifted ability. Determination of mentally gifted shall include a full assessment and comprehensive report by a public school psychologist specifying the nature and degree of the ability.

1998: Same as 1990 except insert, "Intellectual ability is not equated with an IQ score alone. Intellectual ability is and should reflect a range of assessments including a student's performance as well as potential. Standard error of measurement also applies when reporting IQ potential." after "Determination of gifted ability shall not be based on IQ score alone."

### Rhode Island

1990: Local school districts which request support from the state under 16-42 in providing special programs/services for gifted/talented elementary or secondary level students must demonstrate through the process specified in Section two of these regulations that those students:

1. Possess superior capabilities in one or more of the following categories of gifts and talents: a. general intelligence; b. specific academic aptitude; C. creative thinking; d. visual, literary or performing arts; and
2. Require a special educational program/service which is different from that normally provided in the standard school program and which is educationally, personally, and socially beneficial.

1998: Providing programs and services for gifted and talented elementary and secondary level students requires an educational program or services which is different from that normally provided in the standard school program and which is educationally, personally, and socially beneficial; and requires that programs developed serve students who demonstrate unique talents or superior capabilities in areas such as specific academic aptitude, creative thinking, intelligence, visual, performance and industrial arts, and leadership. (The 1998 definition is being revised.)

### South Carolina

1990: Gifted and talented students are those identified in grades 1-12 as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities for high performance in academic or artistic areas and

therefore require services or programs not ordinarily provided by the regular school program.

1998: Gifted and talented students are those who are identified in grades 1-12 as demonstrating high performance ability or potential in academic and/or artistic areas and therefore require an educational program beyond that normally provided by the general school program in order to achieve their potential.

#### South Dakota

1990: Gifted students are children in Grades I through 12 who have superior ability or potential demonstrated through documented evidence and whose educational needs require modification of the regular curriculum. Such ability or potential may be demonstrated in any of the following areas or in combination: (a) General intellectual ability; (b) Creative thinking, (c) Leadership, or (d) Specific academic aptitude.

1998: Reported that there is no state definition. The 1990 definition was repealed in 1995. The definition is left up to the individual school districts.

#### Tennessee

1990: A child whose intellectual abilities and potential for accomplishment are so outstanding that they require a variety of special provisions to meet the established educational needs and who has an intelligence quotient at least two standard deviations above the mean as measured by individual intelligence tests.

1998: A child whose intellectual abilities and potential for achievement are so outstanding that special provisions are required to meet the established educational needs is considered intellectually gifted.

A child must meet two of the following criteria:

- \* Intellectual functioning and ability which measure at least two standard deviations above the mean;
- \* Superior academic or achievement ability which measures in the 96th percentile or above in one or more major academic areas;
- \* Superior intellectual ability demonstrated by the child's ideas and projects related to one or more academic fields.

#### Texas

1990: Gifted and talented students are those who excel consistently or who show the potential to excel in any one or combination of the following areas: general intellectual ability, specific subject matter aptitude, creative and productive thinking ability, leadership ability, ability in the visual and performing arts, and psychomotor ability. These students

require educational experiences beyond those normally provided by the regular school program.

1998: "Gifted and talented student" means a child or youth who performs at or shows the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment and who:

- (1) Exhibits high performance capability in an intellectual, creative or artistic area;
- (2) Possesses an unusual capacity for leadership; or
- (3) Excels in a specific academic field.

#### Utah

1990: "Gifted and talented students" means children and youth whose superior performance or potential for accomplishment requires a differentiated and challenging education program to meet their needs in any one or more of the following areas:

1. General intellectual: students with high aptitude for abstract reasoning and conceptualization, who master skills and concepts quickly, and who are exceptionally alert and observant;
2. Specific academic: students who evidence extraordinary learning ability in one or more specific disciplines;
3. Visual and performing arts- students who are consistently superior in the development of a product or performance in any of the visual and performing arts;
4. Leadership: students who emerge as leaders, and who demonstrate high ability to accomplish group goals by working with and through others;
5. Creative, critical, or productive thinking: students who are highly insightful, imaginative, and innovative, and who consistently assimilate and synthesize seemingly unrelated information to create new and novel solutions for conventional tasks.

1998: Same as 1990.

#### Vermont

1990: Gifted and talented children are those children in preschool, elementary, or secondary school who are capable of extraordinarily high performance. These are children who require educational programs, activities, or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society. They possess demonstrated or potential abilities that indicate extraordinarily high performance, singly, or in combination in such areas as: 1) general intellectual ability, 2) specific

academic aptitude, 3) creative or productive thinking, 4) visual and performing arts, and 5) leadership abilities.

1998: Gifted and talented children means children identified by professional qualified persons who, when compared to others of their age, experience or environment, exhibit capability of high performance in intellectual, creative or artistic areas, possess an unusual capacity for leadership, or excel in specific academic fields. The state board shall define "professionally qualified persons" by rule.

## Virginia

1990: Gifted students are students whose abilities and potential for accomplishment are so outstanding that they require special educational programs to meet their educational needs. Gifted students come from many backgrounds, and their special abilities cover a wide spectrum of human potential.

Gifted students are those at the elementary and secondary grades who are identified by professionally qualified persons through the use of multiple criteria as having potential or demonstrated abilities and who give evidence of high performance capability in one or more of the following areas:

1. General Intellectual Ability - Students with advanced general or specific information and an advanced aptitude for abstract reasoning and conceptualization, whose mental development is accelerated (to the extent that they need and can profit from specifically planned educational services differentiated from those generally provided by the regular program experience).
2. Specific Academic Ability - Students who have aptitude in a specific area such as language arts or math, and who are consistently superior.
3. Visual or Performing Arts Ability - Students who excel consistently in the development of a product or performance in any of the visual or performing arts.
4. Practical Arts Ability - Students who excel consistently in the development of a product or performance in any area of vocational education.
5. Psychosocial Ability - Students who exhibit keen sensitivity to the needs of others and who not only assume leadership roles, but also are accepted by others as leaders.
6. Creative and Productive Thinking Ability - Students who exhibit advanced insights, outstanding imagination, and innovation and who consistently engage in integrating seemingly unrelated information to formulate new and positive solutions to conventional tasks. Creativity refers to the students' ability to produce both tangible and intangible end products involving the use of divergent and convergent thinking and problem solving.

1998: "Gifted Students" means those students in public elementary and secondary schools beginning kindergarten through graduation whose abilities and potential for

accomplishment are so outstanding that they require special programs to meet their educational needs. These students will be identified by professionally qualified persons through the use of multiple criteria as having potential or demonstrated abilities and who have evidence of high performance capabilities, which may include leadership, in one or more of the following areas:

1. Intellectual Aptitude(s) Students with advanced aptitude or conceptualization whose development is accelerated beyond their age peers as demonstrated by advanced skills, concepts, and creative expression in multiple general intellectual ability or in specific intellectual abilities.
2. Specific Academic Aptitude Students with specific aptitudes in selected academic areas: mathematics; the sciences; or the humanities as demonstrated by advanced skills, concepts, and creative expression in those areas.
3. Technical and Practical Arts Aptitude Students with specific aptitudes, selected technical or practical arts as demonstrated by advanced skills and creative expression in those areas to the extent they need and can benefit from specifically planned educational services differentiated from those provided by the general program experience.
4. Visual or Performing Arts Aptitude Students with specific aptitudes in selected visual or performing arts as demonstrated by advanced skills and creative expression who excel consistently in the development of a product or performance in any of the visual and performing arts to the extent that they need and can benefit from specifically planned educational services differentiated from those generally available for all.

#### Washington

1990: The term "highly capable student" shall mean a student who has been assessed to have superior intellectual ability as demonstrated by one or more of the multiple criteria specified below. The multiple criteria for determination of superior intellectual ability shall include:

1. "Cognitive ability," which for the purpose of this chapter shall be defined as the complete range of intellectual functions referred to as intellect, intelligence, or mental abilities and includes such psychological concepts as thinking, abstract reasoning, problem solving, verbal comprehension, and numerical facility.
2. "Specific academic achievement in one or more major content areas" which for the purpose of this chapter shall be defined as obtained results on an achievement test appropriate to discriminate academic performance at high levels of achievement in one or more of the following content areas: (a) Reading; (b) Mathematics; (c) Social Studies; (d) Language arts; and (e) Science
3. "Exceptional creativity" which for the purpose of this chapter shall mean the demonstration of unique or outstanding creative products or the demonstration of unusual problem solving ability or other learning characteristics which indicate to teachers, parents

or classmates that the student has the intellectual potential to perform academically at a level significantly higher than the norm for the chronological grade level.

1998: Same as 1990.

#### West Virginia

1990: Giftedness is defined as exceptional intellectual abilities that are evidence of outstanding capability and require specially designed instruction or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program.

1998: Same as in 1990.

#### Wisconsin

1990: "Gifted and talented pupils" means pupils enrolled in public schools who give evidence of high performance capability in intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership, or specific academic areas and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided in a regular school program in order to fully develop such capabilities.

1998: Same as in 1990.

#### Wyoming

1990: "Gifted and talented children" means children and, whenever applicable, youth who are identified at the preschool, elementary, or secondary level as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, specific academic, or leadership ability, or in the performing and visual arts, and who by reason thereof require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school.

1998: Gifted and talented students are those identified by professionals and other qualified individuals as having outstanding abilities, who are capable of high performance and whose abilities, talents, and potential require qualitatively differentiated educational programs and services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society.

#### DISCUSSION

The majority of the states are using some form of the 1978 federal definition. Three states, (Colorado, Delaware, and Hawaii) are using a form of the 1972 Marland definition which includes the psychomotor category. Wisconsin is the only state which appears to be using the Javits definition, and Arkansas is the only state currently using Renzulli's definition. Four states (Michigan, Vermont, North Carolina, and Texas) seem to be using the most recent definition found within the report on National Excellence. In contrast, the five states of Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and South Dakota report having no state definition at this time.

The majority of states use the term "gifted and talented" to refer to these exceptional students. However, the use of "gifted" only is also prevalent among 13 states. Other terms such as "Learner of High Ability," "Highly Capable Student," and "Exceptional Student" demonstrate an attempt by three states to move away from any reference to "gifted."

Table 1 illustrates the different areas or characteristics of giftedness that were derived from analyzing all definitions. Almost all states make some mention of superior intellect as a characteristic of giftedness. Specific academic ability is recognized by 33 states, creative ability by 30, the visual and performing arts by 20, skills in leadership by 18, and psychomotor ability by 3. Demonstrated or potential achievement is also highly recognized among the states.

Other interesting aspects among the state definitions include the mention of acceleration within Oklahoma's state definition. While many state definitions make references to differentiated educational services, only Oklahoma addresses this specific service. In addition, the mention of pre-school age students is present in the definitions of five states: Indiana, Oklahoma, Vermont, Wyoming, and Colorado. In addition, Colorado specifically mentions students from ages 5 to 21, as well as children under 5, within their definition.

Several states make reference to test scores and percentile ranges as a criterion for identifying students. For example, Florida and Tennessee mention displayed performance 2 standard deviations above the mean on an individually administered standardized test of intelligence in their definitions. New Mexico and Hawaii cite test scores on standardized measures in the superior range and above average range respectively. In addition, Oklahoma and Connecticut refer to gifted students as the top 3% and 5% respectively on relevant standardized measuring instruments. Pennsylvania is the only state to address a specific IQ score requirement of 130 for admission into the gifted program. Pennsylvania, Virginia, Hawaii, and Washington are the only states to explicitly refer to the use of multiple criteria for identification purposes within their definitions.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

A total of 21 states have revised their definition of gifted students since 1990. Five states have completely eliminated their state definition. Of these five, three report that they leave the definition up to the discretion of the local school districts. However, without state legislated definitions, policies, and guidelines serving as a foundation, gifted programs in these states may face the threat of instability. State associations must become proactive in advocating for statewide definitions for gifted students and for the financial support to ensure that all gifted children included within the definition receive needed services. By having a comprehensive state definition, messages conveyed by such groups to the general public within the state have a greater likelihood of being consistent. Lack of consistency in how gifted and talented students are defined have perpetuated myth and misrepresentation as to the true nature and needs of these exceptional students. As education budget cuts continue, the gifted programs will be the first to suffer. Vigorous voices are needed to strengthen public support for these programs. Building support begins with increasing understanding and awareness, which can only be accomplished through a comprehensive definition.

While the federal definition for gifted and talented has appeared to have an impact on those for the states, other definitions have had negligible effect. For example, Renzulli's (1978) definition, although in place for over 20 years, is currently only used in one state (Arkansas). Emerging theories, such as those purposed by Gardner (1983) and Sternberg (1985), may also alter the direction of definitions in the future. Furthermore, with more emphasis on identifying underrepresented groups, such as minorities and the disabled, for participation in gifted programs, it is likely that new state definitions will reflect more inclusive practices. Finally, another component that may influence definitions in the future is the amount of state funding allotted to the identification of and delivery of specialized services for gifted students. While the issue of funding availability was beyond the scope of this present study, further research should be conducted to explore this element and its impact on definitions of the gifted.

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### **Towards a New Paradigm for Identifying Talent Potential**

Frasier, M. M., & Passow, A. H. (Dec. 1994). Towards a New Paradigm for Identifying Talent Potential. ERIC Document ED 388020.

**Abstract:** This monograph presents a paradigm for identifying giftedness among all groups of young people. Section 1 presents a review and critique of traditional identification approaches and highlights the limitations that tests may have for identifying talent potential among groups currently underrepresented in gifted programs. Section 2 examines the values and environmental influences of several cultures, to identify the additional challenges faced by high achieving, ethnically diverse students. Within-group cultural differences are also considered. The third section reports the results of an exploratory study which examined the characteristics of economically disadvantaged and limited English proficient gifted students. Section 4 looks at behaviors that characterize gifted performance, noting research results which suggest that there may be well-known "absolute" behaviors which characterize high performance cross-culturally, as well as specific behaviors which manifest themselves in particular cultural contexts. Emerging insights from the Javits Gifted and Talented Students' Education Act are addressed in the fifth section. The final section provides a synthesis of the previously presented ideas and proposes a five-element paradigm of giftedness, including: (1) new constructs of giftedness; (2) absolute and specific behaviors; (3) cultural and contextual variables; (4) authentic assessment; and (5) identification through learning opportunities. Executive Summary is also published separately. (Contains approximately 125 references.) (Author/DB)

**Title:** Towards a New Paradigm for Identifying Talent Potential. Research Monograph 94112.

**Author:** Frasier, Mary M.; Passow, A. Harry

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**Descriptors:** \* Ability Identification; Behavior Patterns; \* Cultural Differences; Cultural Influences; Economically Disadvantaged; Educational Legislation; Elementary Secondary Education; Ethnic Groups; Federal Legislation; \* Gifted; Limited English Speaking; Minority Groups; Models; \* Student Characteristics; Student Evaluation; \* Talent; Talent Identification

**Identifiers:** \*Jacob K Javits Gifted Talented Stdnt Educ Act 1988

Historical Perspective. (n.d.) *Gifted Challenge Grant*.

The first State Board Rule regarding gifted learners was adopted by the Florida Legislature in 1956. The Rule defined gifted learners in very broad terms: "One instructional unit may be allowed for service provided to children who are gifted, talented, and superior by a full-time, properly qualified person. Such a person will serve 15 to 30 children on a regular basis." Definitions of learners who are gifted have continued to be refined by the Florida Legislature.

Traditionally, the gifted are "those who have unusually high intellectual ability" (1962 Rule) and those who require "a special instructional program because of extraordinary learning ability or outstanding talent in the creative arts" (1970 Rule). The 1974 Rule states that the "mental development of a gifted student is greater than two (2) standard deviations above the mean."

According to the 1993 report on gifted education, *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent*, gifted children are "children that have outstanding talent or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishments when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment."

Education for learners who are gifted has been included within exceptional student education by the Florida Legislature since 1968. In Florida, students are eligible for educational programs if they meet the criteria outlined in Florida Board of Education Rule 6A-6.030 19, FAC. These criteria focus on a learner's need for the gifted education program, entry academic skills, general intellectual functioning, and various behavioral and intellectual characteristics. Sid Parnes (1967) feels that before good solutions to problems are developed, many facts relating or contributing to the problem must be known. It is for this reason that the following text will provide an historical perspective and overview of four essential elements of the gifted program: of curriculum, personnel, communication among vested interest groups, and administrative structure from national, state.. and local historical perspectives. This should provide the reader with the necessary background information about where gifted education has been, presently is, and may be in the future.

## THE HISTORY OF GIFTED EDUCATION A National Perspective

"Concern for the qualities of exceptional human beings arises out of an exceptional concern for the qualities of all human beings." (Gowan, Khatena, and Torrance, 1979). Lewis Terman, (1954), the father of gifted child research, referred to the discovery and encouragement of exceptional talent as follows:

To identify the internal and external factors that help or hinder the fruition of exceptional talent, and to measure the extent of their influences, are surely

among the major problems of our times. These problems are not new; their existence has been recognized by countless men from Plato to Francis Galton. What is new is the general awareness of them caused by the manpower shortage of scientists, engineers, moral leaders, statesmen, scholars, and teachers that the country must have if it is to survive in a threatened world.

This quote is interesting when one considers that a mere three years later the national pride was stung by the launching of the Russian Sputnik I. Americans blamed the educational system. The reaction was, "How could this happen? Something must be done about our schools at once." Weaknesses in mathematics and science education were named as the chief culprits in the Americans' failure to match the Russians in space.

Thus began the formal disagreements among the experts in the field. The first arguments were those regarding "nature vs. nurture." Is high ability and intellect a function of good genetic breeding (theory of fixed intelligence) or can intellectual functioning be increased by environmental factors (interactive theory of intelligence)? Disagreements over the basic concept of who is gifted continue today. The definition passed by Congress in 1981 states that gifted and talented children are those "who give evidence of high performance capabilities in intellectual, creative, artistic areas, in leadership capability or specific academic fields, and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities." (Section 582) More general definitions appear throughout the literature, like the one postulated by Witty (1940) as those "whose performance is consistently remarkable in any potentially valuable area" or by Renzulli (1978) who equates giftedness with creative/productive accomplishments and speaks of the necessary cluster of characteristics that define giftedness. Some have chosen to say they are the two percent who are predicted to score highest on a test of intelligence. Given the advances in brain research a new definition has evolved:

Giftedness is a biologically rooted concept, a label for a high level of intelligence that results from the advanced and accelerated integration of functions within the brain, including physical sensing, emotions, cognition and intuition. Such advanced and accelerated function may be expressed through abilities such as those involved in cognition, creativity, academic aptitude, leadership, or the visual and performing arts (Clark, 1983).

## CURRICULUM

Differing opinions regarding appropriate curriculum models, program organization and personnel arose from these different definitions. A curriculum designed for the academically talented student would surely differ from that of the program provisions for the student with high creative ability or leadership skills. Thus was born the acceleration vs. enrichment controversy. Is the most effective education for gifted students one of moving them at a faster pace through a particular body of knowledge? Or is it more effective to provide areas of learning not normally

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taught in the regular curriculum? These might include advertising weather prediction, city redevelopment, future studies, etc. (Clark, 1983).

### PERSONNEL

Opinions on characteristics and educational background of successful, effective teachers of the gifted have been the topic of much discourse. Aspy(1969) suggests that the most important factor that counts more than any other is the teacher's self concept.

Gallagher, Ascher, and Jenne(1967) found that student success was directly related to the teacher's style, expectation, and response pattern. Some profess that teachers must be gifted themselves in order to teach the gifted. Others feel it is more important for teachers to understand the nature and needs of the gifted.

Surprisingly, few states have any requirements beyond the regular teaching credentials for teachers of the gifted. Few institutions, districts, or state departments of education provide preservice or inservice experiences in gifted education (Clark, 1983).

### COMMUNICATION

One of the first communication efforts related to gifted education was the 1958 National Education Association Invitational Conference on the Academically Talented Pupil. This conference marked the first time that most writers and leaders in the field of gifted had ever met. Eight thousand copies of conference reports were sold within three months. Based on the recommendations emanating from the conference a program funded by the Carnegie Corporation for assisting schools in strengthening curriculum for gifted was disseminated through NEA journals.

Cooperation in a joint curriculum development project with mathematics and science professionals was established. During the eleven years of this project, vital communication between scholars and the public was maintained.

The national trend in educating the gifted was enhanced by the 1971 report to the U.S. Congress by the then U.S. Commissioner of Education, S.P. Marland, Jr. on the status of gifted and talented in the U.S. (Marland, 1972). This report has been quoted time and again because of its significance in identifying the inadequate provisions and widespread misunderstanding found in the field of gifted education.

Results of the Marland study indicated that:

- There were at least 2.5 million gifted and talented school age students in the U.S.
- Only a small percentage of students were receiving any special education services

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- Differential education for these students ranked low on federal, state, and most local levels of government and educational agencies' priorities.
- When unserved, these students do not and cannot excel
- Apathy and hostility among teachers, administrators, guidance counselors and psychologists made identification difficult.
- Lack of services resulted in psychological damage and permanent impairment of the agility of these students.
- The federal government had no role in the leadership or delivery of services for gifted individuals.
- Fewer than 2% of the identified gifted high school students were given an opportunity to work with specialists or in other school settings.
- No students were being served in 21 states.

One outcome of the report was the establishment of the U.S. Office of Gifted and Talented. Money was appropriated through that office to improve the quality of gifted programs.

In 1976 the Council for Exceptional Children conducted a national survey to identify current policies, resources and services in gifted education. CEC findings showed that, as a nation, we were improving.

Between 6% and 45% of the states' population were served, 84% of states had some type of written policy for servicing gifted.

- Only 4% of states had no state consultant.
- State funds accounted for 95% of the total amount expended on gifted programs.
- One or more courses in gifted education were offered by 177 colleges in 45 states.
- State sponsored inservice was reported by 42 states. In an update of the 1976 CEC study, problems most frequently mentioned by the state directors were: lack of adequate funding, trained qualified teachers, and the need for development of a comprehensive K-12 program.

There are current efforts through the National Business Consortium, National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) and CEC/TAG to lobby for legislation and to sponsor funding for projects that would benefit students. One such effort is the recent Javits Bill which provides federal competitive grants to school systems and universities to establish research, development, dissemination and identification projects for gifted and talented.

### ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

During several periods of American history, programs for the gifted were encouraged. But organizing a program that delivers services to gifted learners has been one of the most complex endeavors in the history of gifted education.

“The administrative structure is critical to the success of the gifted program. It will reflect the commitment of the school to either expand or inhibit the opportunities afforded to these able students” (Clark, 1983). Current research has shown that there are many different administrative arrangements being used throughout the country. In some places the gifted program is the responsibility of school principals. In others, a district administrator plans the overall program structure, interviews and recommends teachers, establishes identification and placement procedures, and maintains the budget for these programs. While Clark(1983) supports the district coordinator model as the means to ultimately insure consistent quality programs for gifted, the current trends of school-based or site based management favor a closer locus of control by the principal. More research will be needed to determine whether district coordination or school based control of programs is most effective.

In fact, more empirical studies will need to be conducted before there is a definitive identification process, standardized curriculum, national agreement relative to teacher training and the most appropriate administrative structure in meeting the challenges presented by the diverse population labeled gifted.

#### A STATE PERSPECTIVE

In testimony presented by Dr. Elinor Elfner, Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students (BEES) Representative to the National Commission on Excellence in Education, the major strengths of the gifted program in Florida were outlined. Florida has mandated service to gifted youngsters since 1974. Three basic principles necessary for quality and excellence in programs for the gifted were cited. First, there must be a strong foundation in the basic education program. Secondly, there must be state policies and standards to provide the necessary leadership for the development of program; at the local level. And thirdly, there must be special incentives to continue to work toward excellence.

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**TOPIC 8 – SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT**

**KEY QUESTION:** How do you find them?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Describe traditional/alternative assessment instruments/techniques used to screen and identify students who are gifted. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of these instruments/techniques.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- assessment Instruments
- screening
- advantages of instruments
- disadvantages of instruments

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Clark: *Growing Up Gifted* pp 319-340
- *The Gifted Student: Case Study for Plan A Student.*
- Will the real gifted student please stand up? (HO 1)
- Teacher Bias in Identifying Gifted and Talented Students (HO 2)
- Family Influences on the Achievement of Economically Disadvantaged Students: Implications for Gifted Identification and Programming.(HO 3)
- Examining Identification and Instruction Practices for Gifted and Talented Limited English Proficient Students. (HO 4 abstract)
- ADHD and Children Who Are Gifted. (HO 5)
- Alternative Assessment (May 2000). (HO 6 abstract)
- Identifying Adolescents Using Personality Characteristics: Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities (HO 7)
- Case Study for Plan A Student simulation (HO 8)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Using the full Renzulli Scales battery, evaluate a student who exhibits gifted characteristics.
- Discuss the relative strengths and weakness of the Renzulli Scales.
- Consider group viewing of "Finding Forrester." Discuss reactions.
- Complete *The Gifted Student: Case Study for Plan A Student.*
- Complete the *Identification Simulation.*
- Facilitate a series of Jigsaw discussions on selected articles.
- Create a mind-map to identify salient points of articles for discussion.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- Completed Renzulli Scales.
- Active participation in Renzulli Scales discussion.
- Viewing and discussion of film.

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- Completed *Case Study for Plan A Student*.
- Completed *Identification Simulation*.
- Active participation in group discussions on articles.
- Completed mind maps.

### RESOURCES:

- Will the real gifted student please stand up? *Roeper Review*, Dec 1998; Vol. 21; Issue 2; p161; Barbara Fischetti, Karen Emanuelson; Ann Shames
- Teacher Bias in Identifying Gifted and Talented Students Teri Powell, Del Siegle;  
<http://www.sp.uconn.edu/~nrcgt/news/spring00/sprng005.html>
- Family Influences on the Achievement of Economically Disadvantaged Students: Implications for Gifted Identification and Programming. Scott Hunsaker; Mary Frasier; et al;  
<http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/hunsfra2.html>
- Examining Identification and Instruction Practices for Gifted and Talented Limited English Proficient Students. Andrea Bermudez; Steven Rakow; (abstract) <http://SearchERIC.org/ericdb/ED360871.htm>
- An Analysis of Teacher Nominations and Student Performance in Gifted Programs; *Gifted Child Quarterly*, Vol 41, N0 2; Spring 1997; Scott Hunsaker; Vernon Finley; Elaine Frank
- Wherefore Art Thou, Multiple Intelligences? Alternative Assessments for Identifying Talent in Ethnically Diverse and Low Income Students. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, Vol 40 No. 2: Spring 1996; Jonathan Plucker; Carolyn Callahan; Ellen Tomchin
- ADHD and Children Who Are Gifted. ERIC EC Digest #E522; James Webb; Diane Latimer; <http://searcheric.org/digests/ed358673.html>
- Alternative Assessment (May 2000). <http://ericec.org/faq/qt-altas.html>
- Identifying Adolescents Using Personality Characteristics: Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities; *Roeper Review*, Hun 1997; Vol 19 Issue 4; Cheryl Ackerman; Leigh Paulus
- Case Study for Plan A Student simulation

### **Will the 'real' gifted students please stand up?**

Fischetti, B., Emanuelson, K., & Shames, A. (Dec 1998). *Will the 'real' gifted students please stand up?* Roeper Review, Vol. 21 (2), 161-163.

The design and implementation of a process for identifying gifted students in a school system often leaves educators questioning their ability to differentiate between very bright and gifted students. The plethora of definitions offered by researchers and educational agencies adds to this confusion. The educational community of the Westport School System in Connecticut determined the need to establish an accurate definition of and identification process for the selection of gifted youngsters. This article provides an overview and discussion of the gifted identification process developed to assist the Westport educational community with appropriately identifying very bright and gifted students.

#### Background

Westport is an affluent, suburban town located in lower Fairfield County, Connecticut. The school population is approximately 3,600 students, with 84% of graduates attending four year colleges and 7% attending two year colleges. There are three elementary schools (K-4), two middle schools (5-8), and one high school (9-12).

Westport has had a program for its gifted youngsters for 25 years, but it did not have a systematic, equitable process for identification of its gifted children. Inclusion was based on the classroom teacher's observations, knowledge of gifted behaviors, classroom experiences and parental pressure. The inaccuracy of the selection process was often debated by the teaching staff as well as parents. The staff of the elementary schools in Westport found it difficult to justify those identified as gifted. From school to school, there was a gender imbalance and a variation in the intellectual levels which made programming for these students difficult.

In Westport, giftedness is currently defined as measured intellectual ability at or above the 99th percentile and demonstrated intellectual sophistication and higher order thinking skills in classroom performance. This information was obtained through six critical components: a referral form, student rating questionnaire, examples of classroom performance, parent assessment questionnaire, Otis-Lennon School Ability Test, and performance-based assessment.

At the beginning of the 1994-1995 school year, the first year of the revised program, professional development activities were introduced to educate parents and teachers about the process of and the criteria for selection of gifted youngsters. After these yearly activities, the educational community of teachers, administrators and parents nominated candidates for identification as gifted. A screening portfolio was opened for each nominee which contained the six critical components gathered for each student.

The referral form asked teachers to describe the reasons for nomination. The student rating questionnaire compared the nominated students to their peers on behaviors typically associated with gifted students. This brief scale is similar in content to the Renzulli and Hartman (1971) Scale for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students.

The third portfolio component of three or more indicators of classroom performance supporting a student's nomination included anecdotal information, photographs, videotapes, research projects, classroom assignments, and audiotapes.

The parent assessment questionnaire, completed for each nominated student, revealed the child's development prior to entering school and expanded upon the student's special interests, play activities, imagination, and curiosity. The questionnaire gave the screening committee an opportunity to view the child through the eyes of the parents.

The Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (Otis & Lennon, 1993) results, the fifth portfolio component, measured general reasoning ability and gave a verbal non-verbal and total school ability index.

The final portfolio component, performance based tasks in language arts and math conducted in the classroom, involved problem solving tasks that were instructional, simulated the classroom environment, and provided a public record of the task (Guthrie, Van Meter & Mitchell, 1994).

The completed portfolio was presented to a screening committee in each building consisting of a building administrator, classroom teacher(s), town-wide instructional support teacher(s), teacher of the gifted, school psychologist, and the coordinator of psychological services. Students meeting previously established district criteria were identified as gifted. It is important to note that individual opinions and assessment tools were given equal consideration. In 1994-95, 12.58% of the student pool was identified as gifted. In 1995-96, 9.38% of the student pool was identified as gifted.

#### Evaluation/Follow-up

The Westport identification process was evaluated in a two-step manner. At the end of the first year of screening, a questionnaire was sent to teachers asking them to anonymously evaluate the components of the screening process on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The results of the questionnaire indicated that the staff found the identification process valuable and felt it identified gifted youngsters. The teachers also noted the identification process furthered their understanding of the children in their classroom and recommendations were formulated for the next school year. These included additional staff development workshops, continued development of the performance based tasks, further development of the indicators of classroom performance, and continuation of the identification process for the following school year.

At the end of the second year of the program, Dr. Lisa Wright of Columbia University, as a consultant, evaluated the selection process. She noted the overwhelming success of the identification procedure as accurately identifying gifted students. Recommendations from this evaluation included the sharing of the screening folder with parents of identified gifted students, continuation of the identification process, and the offering of yearly systematic professional development for staff and parents. Overall, the Westport gifted selection procedures incorporated a continuing evaluation and follow-up methodology designed to improve assessment, identification, and curriculum components.

As Westport continued to fine tune the process of gifted identification, the power and importance of the various components became increasingly evident. Westport utilized a six component process: a referral form, student rating questionnaire, examples of classroom performance, parent assessment questionnaire, Otis-Lennon School Ability Test, and performance based assessment. The impact of the systematic identification process enabled the discrimination of the very bright from the truly gifted student in Westport. This process may assist other school systems with identifying their gifted population.

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- Renzulli, J. & Hartman, R. (1971). Scale for rating behavioral characteristics of superior students: *Exceptional Children*, 38 (3), 243-248. By Barbara Fischetti; Karen Emanuelson and Ann Shames
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Abstract: Focuses on the identification and rating process for

the selection of gifted students in Connecticut. Documents used for identifying candidates considered as gifted; Evaluation of the identification process.

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## Teacher Bias in Identifying Gifted and Talented Students

Powell, T. (n.d.) *Teacher Bias in Identifying Gifted and Talented Students*. Retrieved from <http://www.sp.uconn.edu/~nrcgt/news/spring00/sprng005.html>

Teachers are often asked to nominate students for gifted and talented programs. Whether or not teachers are qualified identifiers of gifted students has been the topic of much debate throughout the years (Gagné, 1994; Hoge & Cudmore, 1986; Pagnato & Birch, 1959; Rohrer, 1995). The purpose of this study was to identify student characteristics that might influence teacher referrals for gifted and talented programs. Teachers as Raters of Giftedness

Pagnato and Birch (1959) compared the efficiency and effectiveness of seven different methods of identifying gifted students and observed that "teachers do not locate gifted children effectively or efficiently enough to place much reliance on them for screening" (p. 303). The Pagnato and Birch study has been used for almost 40 years to discount the value of classroom teachers as qualified identifiers of gifted students. Their work has been frequently cited to support the opinion that classroom teachers are not reliable at identifying gifted students in their classrooms.

Gagné (1994) criticized the methods employed by Pagnato and Birch. "We should not compare the effectiveness and efficiency levels of a given method (e.g., method X is very effective, but not very efficient) because these two indices will move in opposite directions as we change the cut off scores" (p. 125). Gagné suggested that data from the Pagnato and Birch study be reevaluated by computing a correlation coefficient between each method and the criterion. After reanalyzing the data, Gagné found that "teachers do not come out worse than most other sources of information, including some subgroups of the Otis" (p. 126).

More recent studies have also indicated that teachers are not the poor identifiers of gifted students that Pagnato and Birch (1959) indicated. Hoge and Cudmore (1986) suggested there is very little empirical foundation for the negative evaluation so often associated with teacher judgment measures. Rohrer (1995) found that while teachers' preconceived notions of giftedness could preclude children with certain personality traits from consideration for gifted programs, overall, "teachers were able to recognize intellectual potential in students who were not the stereotypical White, fit, well-adjusted, high-achieving students" (p. 279).

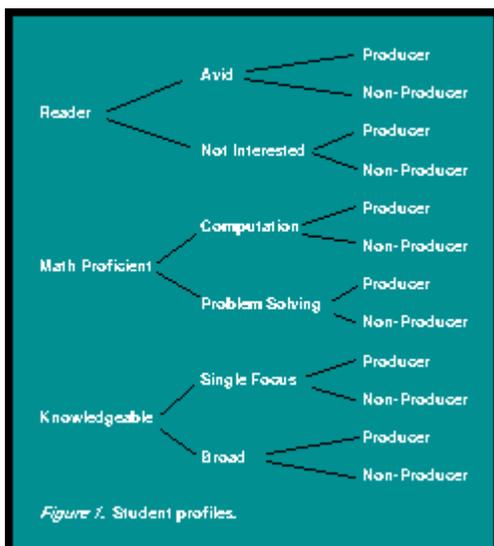
Renzulli and his colleagues (Renzulli et al., 1976) developed the Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students for use by classroom teachers to nominate students. The Scales are among the most popular instruments of identification used today for nominating students for gifted programs. However, Renzulli cautioned that teachers should be trained before using the rating scales. One area of concern in identifying students for gifted programs is gender bias. Gagné (1993) reported that males were more often thought to be more able in areas requiring physical

or technical skill and females were perceived as performing better in the areas of artistic talent and socioaffective domains. Teachers spend more time interacting with male students in verbal and nonverbal ways (Mann, 1994; Oliveres & Rosenthal, 1992; Sadker & Sadker, 1993). Teachers face male students when talking (Sadker & Sadker, 1995) and give more detailed instructions to male students (Oliveres & Rosenthal, 1992). Not only do males received more attention, but the quality of this attention is higher than that received by females. Perhaps this additional attention translates into males receiving special "nomination" attention as well.

Bernard (1979) found that "irrespective of the sex of teacher or student, or course of study, students who are perceived as masculine in role orientation are likely to be evaluated more highly than students who are not" (p. 562). Dusek and Joseph (1983) also found that "teachers were more likely to expect high achieving students, regardless of gender, to be masculine or androgynous, and low achieving students, regardless of gender, to be feminine or undifferentiated" (p. 338).

### Methodology

We developed 12 student profiles based on Tannenbaum's (1997) concept of producing and non-producing gifted students (see Figure 1). For example, we created four profiles that featured some aspect of reading. Two of the profiles depicted students who were avid readers, and two of the profiles depicted students who were not interested in reading. Of each of these pairs, one featured a student who was engaged in classwork (producer), and one featured a student who did not complete classwork (non-producer). In total, twelve different profiles were created. We created an identical set of 12 profiles in which only the gender of the student's name was changed. While one profile featured Brenda, an identical one featured Brian. Anglo names were used to avoid adding an additional selection criteria of ethnicity. The 12 profiles were given to a panel of three judges. Each judge correctly identified which of the 12 categories in Figure 1 matched the profiles.



We also created three additional profiles. One featured an introverted, quiet,

absentminded student. Another involved a "cocky," dominant student who put down others. The final profile included a language arts oriented, avid reader with a large vocabulary.

The profiles were organized into two sets of 15. Each set contained a mixture of males and females who depicted each of the 12 categories shown in Figure 1 plus the 3 additional personalities. Ninety-two educators, classroom teachers (n=58) and gifted and talented specialists (n=34), who were attending a week-long, regional gifted and talented conference in the Northwest evaluated a set of 15 profiles. The educators were instructed to "Make recommendations of students that should be included in a gifted and talented program." A 4-point Likert scale with 1= "Definitely NOT include," 2 ="NOT include with reservations," 3="Include with reservations," and 4= "Definitely include" was used for each student profile.

## Results

Gender differences were found with two profiles. Gifted and talented specialists and classroom teachers were similar in rating producing avid readers higher than non-producing readers. However, non-producing males who were not interested in reading were rated higher than similar females by classroom teachers. Introverted, absent-minded females were nominated with less confidence than males with similar nonproductive characteristics.

Math problem-solving producers were more likely to be nominated than similar non-producers. Gifted and talented specialists were likely to nominate producing and non-producing math problem-solvers than classroom teachers were. Non-producers who exhibited superior mental computation skills earned higher ratings than producers who used standard computation methods. Gifted and talented specialists valued mental computations more than classroom teachers.

The esoteric nature of students' knowledge appeared to influence educators' selections. Non-producers who were interested in airplane design and flying were more likely to be nominated than producing students, who were interested in dinosaurs, a topic of interest to most elementary students. The nature of the student interest appeared to influence classroom teachers more than it influenced gifted and talented specialists.

## Discussion

It appears that some gender stereotypes still exist when identifying students for gifted programs. Boys were excused for being disorganized and introverted. Non-producing avid readers who were male also received higher ratings than similar females. The gender stereotype of females "liking reading" and boys "not liking reading" seemed to carry over to identification. It may be that when students fail to match the gender stereotype, their unexpected behavior draws attention to them. In some cases, this may increase the likelihood of their being nominated for gifted and talented programs. Tannenbaum (1986) described gifted traits as being both scarce and valued. Based on this preliminary study, it may be that some students are nominated for a program because they do not "fit the mold," rather than for the gifted behaviors that they exhibit.

This finding is supported with the higher rating received by the nonproductive student with an esoteric interest over the producing student with a common interest. Overall, students who chose not to engage in classroom assignments were rated lower than students of a similar profile who did engage in classroom assignments. Such students may be classified as underachievers. These underachievers end up being under-identified as well. Despite demonstrating productivity related to personal interests, these students were seldom recommended. This is unfortunate, since involvement in gifted and talented programs may provide the intellectual stimulation many of these students seek through personal interests. Baum, Renzulli, and Hébert (1995) found that students who had the opportunity to explore advanced projects related to personal interests often reversed their underachievement pattern. Gifted and talented specialists tended to rate students higher than classroom teachers. It may be that they concentrated more on the positive aspects of the student profiles, rather than the negative ones. Programs for the gifted often concentrate on student strengths and interests and the gifted and talented coordinators may have been sensitive to these features of the profiles. Classroom teachers are often cast in a diagnose and remediate role with students. Under such expectations, they may be more sensitive to student weaknesses. Classroom teachers who are asked to identify gifted and talented students should be encouraged to identify characteristics that indicate giftedness, rather than look for reasons why a child is not gifted. This study indicates that teachers need better training to help them recognize the stereotypical beliefs they hold about gifted and talented students. Such training will go a long way toward improving referrals for gifted and talented programs.

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### **Family Influences on the Achievement of Economically Disadvantaged Students: Implications for Gifted Identification and Programming**

Hunsaker, S. L., Frasier, M. M., King, L. L., Watts-Warren, B., Cramond, B. & Krisel, S. (1995). *Family influences on the achievement of economically disadvantaged students: Implications for gifted identification and programming* (RM95206). Storrs, CT: The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, University of Connecticut.

Historically, the study of family influences on the achievement of economically disadvantaged youth has focused on status variables. A moderate, positive correlation has been found between socioeconomic status and children's academic achievement. However, status variables have been criticized for oversimplifying a complex problem. In their stead, family process variables have been studied. Family processes, such as support of education and aspirations for children's academic attainment, have been shown to influence positively the achievement of children. Studies continue to be done from both a status and a process point of view. More recent studies of status have focused on family structure variables. These studies have shown a correlation between single parenting and low academic achievement. However, the presence of extended family members has been shown to overcome this problem in many instances. Further, some researchers have shown that the relationship of single parenthood with academic achievement is mediated through processes in the family that support academic achievement.

In lieu of studying status and process variables, more recent studies have begun to investigate the impact of contexts on family processes that affect academic achievement. In this context research, it is recognized that families do not operate in isolation to influence achievement, but that communities and schools also have importance. Schools can be particularly helpful when they teach in ways that are congruent to the culture of the family and find ways of involving the family in the school culture.

Studies of these same issues within the field of gifted education have followed the same path as the general achievement research. Status variables have been found to correlate directly with the performance of students on measures used to identify them as gifted. More recently, researchers have begun to look at the influence of context on the family processes that affect which students are identified for gifted programs and influence how they are served. Studies of context reveal that gifted students exist and are nurtured within economically disadvantaged families, but point to the need to focus on individual expressions of giftedness within cultural contexts when making decisions about the placement and programming. As indicated here, advances have been made in understanding the relationships among families, academic achievement, and gifted education. However, a general lack of studies focusing on these issues makes apparent the need for further research of this type.

#### **Reference:**

Hunsaker, S. L., Frasier, M. M., King, L. L., Watts-Warren, B., Cramond, B. & Krisel, S. (1995). *Family influences on the achievement of economically disadvantaged students: Implications for gifted identification and programming* (RM95206). Storrs, CT: The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, University of Connecticut.

### **Conclusions**

1. Academically competent students exist in all ethnic and socioeconomic groups.
2. The existence of poverty or single parent family situations does not coincide with a lack of interest in academic achievement. Families of economically disadvantaged students need to be dealt with individually and not within the context of social stereotypes.
3. The school needs to be aware that the culture of the family may not match that of the school. Identification of strengths and interpretations of behaviors need to be sensitive to these cultural differences.

Research into the educational needs of economically disadvantaged students has centered around identification and instrumentation. A wider context, involving culture and environmental factors, needs to be included in studies of these students.

### **Examining Identification and Instruction Practices for Gifted and Talented Limited English Proficient Students**

**Author:** Bermudez, A. B. & Rakow, S. J. (1993). *Examining Identification and Instruction Practices for Gifted and Talented Limited English Proficient Students*. In Lilliam M. Malave (Ed.) Annual Conference Journal. Proceedings of the National Association for Bilingual Education Conferences (Tucson, AZ, 1990; Washington, DC, 1991). Washington, DC, 1993, p99-114. ERIC Document ED360871.

**Abstract:** Underrepresentation of minority students in gifted and talented (G/T) programs is a well established fact. A study examined procedures and criteria used to identify, place, and instruct gifted and talented students with limited English proficiency (GT/LEPs) in Texas, California, Colorado, Florida, Arizona, and New York public schools, to help identify factors contributing to underrepresentation of this population in gifted and talented (GT) educational programs. GT program coordinators (n=268) in a cross-section of schools responded to a survey. Less than 20 percent had established a means for identifying GT/LEPs. Respondents identified characteristic GT student behaviors that might be masked by linguistic and cultural differences, including a variety of language, cognitive, inter- /intrapersonal, academic, and artistic skills. Almost 80 percent acknowledged the need to use different means of assessment than for mainstream students. Most used multiple sources in identifying GT/LEPs. Only about 30 percent found their identification processes successful. A majority had no community input in identification. Under 10 percent had programs to serve the students identified. Although most respondents agreed that technology was important in the education of these students, there were no recommendations for effective software. Very few established GT/LEP programs used differentiated instructional materials, as recommended in the literature, but a majority followed theoretically-based program models. Parent involvement was less extensive than parental support. (MSE)

**Title:** Examining Identification and Instruction Practices for Gifted and Talented Limited English Proficient Students.

**Author:** Bermudez, Andrea B.; Rakow, Steven J.

**Note:** 18p.; In: Malave, Lilliam M., Ed. Annual Conference Journal. Proceedings of the National Association for Bilingual Education Conferences (Tucson, AZ, 1990; Washington, DC, 1991). Washington, DC, 1993, p99-114; see FL 021 457.

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**Descriptors:** \* Bilingual Education; Classroom Techniques; Educational Strategies; Elementary Secondary Education; \* Gifted; Hispanic Americans; \* Identification; \* Limited English Speaking; Public Schools; Screening Tests; Student Characteristics; \* Student Placement; \* Talent; Testing

**Identifiers:** Arizona; California; Colorado; Florida; New York; Texas

## ADHD and Children Who Are Gifted

Webb, J. T., & Latimer, D. (1993). ADHD and Children Who Are Gifted. ERIC EC Digest #E522.

Howard's teachers say he just isn't working up to his ability. He doesn't finish his assignments, or just puts down answers without showing his work; his handwriting and spelling are poor. He sits and fidgets in class, talks to others, and often disrupts class by interrupting others. He used to shout out the answers to the teachers' questions (they were usually right), but now he day-dreams a lot and seems distracted. Does Howard have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), is he gifted, or both?

Frequently, bright children have been referred to psychologists or pediatricians because they exhibited certain behaviors (e.g., restlessness, inattention, impulsivity, high activity level, day-dreaming) commonly associated with a diagnosis of ADHD. Formally, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III-R) (American Psychiatric Association) lists 14 characteristics that may be found in children diagnosed as having ADHD. At least 8 of these characteristics must be present, the onset must be before age 7, and they must be present for at least six months:

DSM-III-R Diagnostic Criteria for Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder\*

- Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat (in adolescents may be limited to subjective feelings of restlessness).
- Has difficulty remaining seated when required to.
- Is easily distracted by extraneous stimuli.
- Has difficulty awaiting turns in games or group situations.
- Often blurts out answers to questions before they have been completed.
- Has difficulty following through on instructions from others (not due to oppositional behavior or failure of comprehension).
- Has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities.
- Often shifts from one uncompleted activity to another.
- Has difficulty playing quietly.
- Often talks excessively.
- Often interrupts or intrudes on others, e.g., butts into other people's games.
- Often does not seem to listen to what is being said to him or her.
- Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities at school or at home (e.g., toys, pencils, books).

Often engages in physically dangerous activities without considering possible consequences (not for the purpose of thrill-seeking), e.g., runs into street without looking. Almost all of these behaviors, however, might be found in bright, talented, creative, gifted children. Until now, little attention has been given to the similarities and differences between the two groups, thus raising the potential for misidentification in both areas -- giftedness and ADHD.

Sometimes, professionals have diagnosed ADHD by simply listening to parent or teacher descriptions of the child's behaviors along with a brief observation of the child. Other times, brief screening questionnaires are used, although these questionnaires only quantify the parents' or teachers' descriptions of the behaviors (Parker, 1992). Children who are fortunate enough to have a thorough physical evaluation (which includes screening for allergies and other metabolic disorders) and extensive psychological evaluations, which include assessment of intelligence, achievement, and emotional status, have a better chance of being accurately identified. A child may be gifted and have ADHD. Without a thorough professional evaluation, it is difficult to tell.

### **How Can Parents or Teachers Distinguish Between ADHD and Giftedness?**

Seeing the difference between behaviors that are sometimes associated with giftedness but also characteristic of ADHD is not easy, as the following parallel lists show:

Behaviors Associated with ADHD (Barkley, 1990)

- Poorly sustained attention in almost all situations
  - Diminished persistence on tasks not having immediate consequences
  - Impulsivity, poor delay of gratification
  - Impaired adherence to commands to regulate or inhibit behavior in social contexts
  - More active, restless than normal children
  - Difficulty adhering to rules and regulations
- Behaviors Associated with Giftedness (Webb, 1993)
- Poor attention, boredom, daydreaming in specific situations
  - Low tolerance for persistence on tasks that seem irrelevant
  - Judgment lags behind development of intellect
  - Intensity may lead to power struggles with authorities
  - High activity level; may need less sleep
  - Questions rules, customs and traditions
  - Consider the Situation and Setting

It is important to examine the situations in which a child's behaviors are problematic. Gifted children typically do not exhibit problems in all situations. For example, they may be seen as ADHD-like by one classroom teacher, but not by another; or they may be seen as ADHD at school, but not by the scout leader or music teacher. Close examination of the troublesome situation generally reveals other factors which are prompting the problem behaviors. By contrast, children with ADHD typically exhibit the problem behaviors in virtually all settings including at home and at school though the extent of their problem behaviors may fluctuate significantly from setting to setting (Barkley, 1990), depending largely on the structure of that situation. That is, the behaviors exist in all settings, but are more of a problem in some settings than in others.

In the classroom, a gifted child's perceived inability to stay on task is likely to be related to boredom, curriculum, mismatched learning style, or other environmental factors. Gifted children may spend from one-fourth to one-half of their regular classroom time waiting for others to catch up -- even more if they are in a heterogeneously grouped class. Their specific level of academic achievement is often two to four grade levels above their actual grade placement. Such children often respond to non-challenging or slow-moving

classroom situations by "off-task" behavior, disruptions, or other attempts at self-amusement. This use of extra time is often the cause of the referral for an ADHD evaluation.

Hyperactive is a word often used to describe gifted children as well as children with ADHD. As with attention span, children with ADHD have a high activity level, but this activity level is often found across situations (Barkley, 1990). A large proportion of gifted children are highly active too. As many as one-fourth may require less sleep; however, their activity is generally focused and directed (Clark, 1992; Webb, Meckstroth, & Tolan, 1982), in contrast to the behavior of children with ADHD. The intensity of gifted children's concentration often permits them to spend long periods of time and much energy focusing on whatever truly interests them. Their specific interests may not coincide, however, with the desires and expectations of teachers or parents.

While the child who is hyperactive has a very brief attention span in virtually every situation (usually except for television or computer games), children who are gifted can concentrate comfortably for long periods on tasks that interest them, and do not require immediate completion of those tasks or immediate consequences. The activities of children with ADHD tend to be both continual and random; the gifted child's activity usually is episodic and directed to specific goals.

While difficulties and adherence to rules and regulations has only begun to be accepted as a sign of ADHD (Barkley, 1990), gifted children may actively question rules, customs and traditions, sometimes creating complex rules which they expect others to respect or obey. Some engage in power struggles. These behaviors can cause discomfort for parents, teachers, and peers.

One characteristic of ADHD that does not have a counterpart in children who are gifted is variability of task performance. In almost every setting, children with ADHD tend to be highly inconsistent in the quality of their performance (i.e., grades, chores) and the amount of time used to accomplish tasks (Barkley, 1990). Children who are gifted routinely maintain consistent efforts and high grades in classes when they like the teacher and are intellectually challenged, although they may resist some aspects of the work, particularly repetition of tasks perceived as dull. Some gifted children may become intensely focused and determined (an aspect of their intensity) to produce a product that meets their self-imposed standards.

### **What Teachers and Parents Can Do**

Determining whether a child has ADHD can be particularly difficult when that child is also gifted. The use of many instruments, including intelligence tests administered by qualified professionals, achievement and personality tests, as well as parent and teacher rating scales, can help the professional determine the subtle differences between ADHD and giftedness. Individual evaluation allows the professional to establish maximum rapport with the child to get the best effort on the tests. Since the test situation is constant, it is possible to make better comparisons among children. Portions of the intellectual and achievement tests will reveal attention problems or learning disabilities, whereas personality tests are designed to show whether emotional problems (e.g., depression or anxiety) could be

causing the problem behaviors. Evaluation should be followed by appropriate curricular and instructional modifications that account for advanced knowledge, diverse learning styles, and various types of intelligence.

Careful consideration and appropriate professional evaluation are necessary before concluding that bright, creative, intense youngsters like Howard have ADHD. Consider the characteristics of the gifted/talented child and the child's situation. Do not hesitate to raise the possibility of giftedness with any professional who is evaluating the child for ADHD; however, do not be surprised if the professional has had little training in recognizing the characteristics of gifted/talented children (Webb, 1993). It is important to make the correct diagnosis, and parents and teachers may need to provide information to others since giftedness is often neglected in professional development programs.

\*Note: "DSM-III-R Diagnostic Criteria For Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder" reprinted with permission from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Third Edition, Revised, Washington, DC, American Psychiatric Association, 1987.

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## Alternative Assessment ERIC Resources

Our school system wants to use alternative assessment along with standardized tests to assess our students. What is alternative assessment and how does it differ from other concepts such as portfolio assessment?

The following list of ERIC definitions for concepts related to alternative assessment is from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation. These terms may be used as descriptors or identifiers when searching the ERIC database. Additional information on alternative assessments is available from The [National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing](#), which conducts research on important topics related to K-12 educational testing.

*Alternative Assessment* (ERIC descriptor) is any form of measuring what students know and are able to do other than traditional standardized tests. Alternative forms of assessment include portfolios that are collections of students' work over time, performance-based assessments, and other means of testing students such as open-ended essays with no single correct answer, and project work that involves collaboration with peers.

*Authentic Assessment* (ERIC Identifier). Student assessment in which knowledges and skills are measured using the real world environment, rather than standardized tests.

*Informal Assessment* (ERIC Descriptor). Appraisal of an individual or group's status or growth by means other than standardized instruments. (Term dates officially to 1977.)

*Performance Based Evaluation*. No official working definition in ERIC; however, the best definition that we can locate is from the Office of Technology Assessment of the U.S. Congress (1992): Performance Assessment is testing that requires a student to create an answer or a product that demonstrates his or her knowledge or skills.

*Portfolio Assessment* (ERIC Descriptor). Systematic collection of a student's work samples, records of observation, test results, etc., over a period of time for the purpose of evaluating student growth and achievement - used occasionally with populations other than students. (Term dates officially from 1994.)

*Portfolios (Background Materials)* (ERIC Descriptor). Collections of records, letters of reference, work samples, etc., documenting skills, capabilities, and past experiences. (Term dates officially from 1978.)

Following are links to related Internet resources and Internet discussion groups, as well as selected citations from the ERIC database and the search terms we used to find the citations.

[Internet Resources](http://ericec.org/faq/gt-urls.html) (<http://ericec.org/faq/gt-urls.html>)

[Internet Discussion Groups](http://ericec.org/gifted.html) (<http://ericec.org/gifted.html>)

You can search the ERIC database yourself on the Internet through either of the following web sites:

[ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation \(ERIC AE\)](http://ericae.net/search.htm) (<http://ericae.net/search.htm>)

[ERIC Clearinghouse on Information and Technology \(ERIC IT\)](http://ericir.syr.edu/Eric/) (<http://ericir.syr.edu/Eric/>).  
ERIC Citations The full text of citations beginning with an ED number (for example, EDxxxxxx) is available:

In microfiche collections worldwide; to find your nearest ERIC Resource Collection, point your web browser to: <http://ericae.net/derc.htm>.

For a fee through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS): <http://edrs.com>, [service@edrs.com](mailto:service@edrs.com), or 1.800.443.ERIC.

The full text of citations beginning with an EJ number (for example, EJxxxxxx) is available for a fee from:

The originating journal

Through interlibrary loan services at your local college or public library

From article reproduction services such as

*Infotrieve*: 800.422.4633; [www4.infotrieve.com](http://www4.infotrieve.com), [service@infotrieve.com](mailto:service@infotrieve.com)

*ingenta*: 800.296.2221; [www.ingenta.com](http://www.ingenta.com), [ushelp@ingenta.com](mailto:ushelp@ingenta.com)

EJ561011 EC618317

Assessment: Shifting the Responsibility.

Carter, Claudia R.

*Journal of Secondary Gifted Education*; v9 n2 p68-75 Win 1997-1998

Publication Type: 080; 141

ISSN-1077-4610

Language: English

This paper describes Test Analysis, an alternative assessment method which shifts the responsibility for learning and grading to the student. Students perform a written analysis of their corrected tests, especially errors, prior to receiving a final grade. Improvements in student attitudes toward tests and performance on them are reported from using Test Analysis with gifted high school students in a calculus class.

Descriptors: Academic Achievement; \*Academically Gifted; Calculus; Error Patterns; \*Grading; High Schools; \*Self Evaluation (Individuals); Student Attitudes; \*Student Evaluation; \*Student Responsibility; \*Test Interpretation

Identifiers: \*Alternative Assessment

EJ579550 EC620634

Will the Real Gifted Students Please Stand Up?

Fischetti, Barbara; Emanuelson, Karen; Shames, Ann

*Roeper Review*; v21 n2 p161-62 Dec 1998

Publication Type: 080; 141

ISSN-0278-3193

Language: English

Eric Issue: CIJSEP1999

This article describes the gifted identification process of the Westport, Connecticut, school system. The process uses information obtained through six components: a referral form, student rating questionnaire, examples of classroom performance, parent assessment questionnaire, Otis-Lenon School Ability Tests, and performance-based assessment.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Evaluation Criteria; Evaluation Methods; \*Gifted; Intelligence Tests; \*Parent Participation; \*Performance Based Assessment; Questionnaires; Referral; \*Student Evaluation

Identifiers: \*Connecticut (Westport)

ED410736 EC305796

Reducing Disproportionate Representation of Culturally Diverse Students in Special and Gifted Education.

Artiles, Alfredo J.; Zamora-Duran, Grace (Eds.)

Council for Exceptional Children, Reston, VA. 1997

ISBN: 0-86586-297-4

104p.; Available From: Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191-1589.

EDRS Price - MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.

Language: English

Document Type: BOOK (010); COLLECTION (020); NON-CLASSROOM MATERIAL (055)

Geographic Source: U.S.; Virginia

Journal Announcement: RIEJAN98

Target Audience: Practitioners

This book discusses the disproportionate representation of students from minority backgrounds in special education and gifted classes, and presents strategies that practitioners can use to better address the educational needs of all students. One chapter, "Disproportionate Representation in Gifted Programs: Best Practices for Meeting This Challenge" (James M. Patton), discusses the under representation of children from minority backgrounds in gifted education and presents alternative assessment procedures.

Descriptors: Access to Education; Classroom Communication; Cultural Differences; \*Cultural Influences; \*Disabilities; \*Disability Identification; Elementary Secondary Education; Evaluation Methods; \*Gifted; Interpersonal Communication; \*Minority Group Children; Performance Based Assessment; Portfolio Assessment; Special Education; Student Behavior; Student Evaluation; Student Placement; \*Talent Identification

Identifiers: \*Disproportionate Representation (Spec Educ)

EC902651

Multiple Intelligences and Assessment: A Collection of Articles

Torff, Bruce (Ed.)

ISBN-1-57517-065-5

219p.; 1997

Availability: IRI Skylight Training and Publishing, Inc., 2626 S. Clearbrook Drive, Arlington Heights, IL 60005-5310; toll free telephone: 800-348-4474; e-mail: info@iriskylight.com.

Document Type: COLLECTED WORKS-GENERAL (020); BOOKS (010)

This anthology reports on the current state of teaching based on Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (MI), beginning with an introductory chapter by Bruce Torff. The first section reviews MI theory and describes alternative assessment research being done at Gardner's "Project Zero" center at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Section 2 examines portfolios and other classroom projects. Section 3 describes various models.

Descriptors: \*Gifted ; \*Intelligence ; \*Intelligence Tests; \*Portfolio Assessment; \*Performance Based Assessment; Elementary Secondary Education; Intelligence Differences; Educational Diagnosis; Child Psychology; Student Evaluation; Teaching Methods; Educational Psychology

Identifiers: \*Multiple Intelligences; Gardner Howard

EJ549072 EC616868

The Validity of Portfolios in Predicting Performances in a Gifted Program.

Johnsen, Susan K.; Ryser, Gail R.

Journal for the Education of the Gifted, v20 n3 p253-67 Spr 1997

ISSN: 0162-3532

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143)

Journal Announcement: CIJJAN98

Target Audience: Researchers

This study examined the degree to which samples collected in product portfolios from 216 kindergarten through second-grade students were able to predict their successful performance in a gifted program four years later. Students whose product portfolios were in the top quarter performed significantly better on later math and reading achievement subtests, but their classroom performance was not significantly better.

Descriptors: Academic Achievement; Elementary Education; \*Gifted; Mathematics Achievement; \*Portfolio Assessment; \*Prediction; Primary Education; Reading Achievement  
EJ532401 EC614684

What Are Alternative Assessments?

Johnsen, Susan

Gifted Child Today Magazine, v19 n4 p12-13,49-50 Jul-Aug 1996

ISSN: 1076-2175

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); NON-CLASSROOM MATERIAL (055)

Journal Announcement: CIJMAR97

Target Audience: Parents

This article attempts to introduce parents of gifted students to the basics of performance-based assessment, authentic assessment, and portfolio assessment. A list of suggested questions is provided for parents to ask educators in the areas of alternative assessment measures, evaluation criteria, grading guidelines, and other problematic issues.

Descriptors: Elementary Secondary Education; Evaluation Methods; \*Gifted; \*Grading; \*Performance Based Assessment; \*Portfolio Assessment; \*Student Evaluation; Student Records

Identifiers: \*Alternative Assessment; Authentic Assessment

EJ527602 EC614059

Wherefore Art Thou, Multiple Intelligences? Alternative Assessments for Identifying Talent in Ethnically Diverse and Low Income Students.

Plucker, Jonathan A.; And Others

Gifted Child Quarterly, v40 n2 p81-92 Spr 1996

Special issue: World Class Standards, Alternative Assessment and Extraordinary Performance.

ISSN: 0016-9862

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143)

Journal Announcement: CIJDEC96

Target Audience: Researchers

This study evaluated the reliability and validity of a battery of instruments based on Multiple Intelligences theory, including teacher checklists and performance-based assessment activities

developed for the identification of talent in culturally diverse and/or low-income kindergarten and first-grade students. Acceptable reliability but questionable validity were found.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Check Lists; Cultural Differences; \*Ethnic Groups; Evaluation Methods; \*Gifted Disadvantaged; Low Income Groups; Minority Groups; \*Performance Based Assessment; Primary Education; Student Evaluation; Talent Identification; \*Test Reliability; \*Test Validity; Theories  
Identifiers: Alternative Assessment; \*Multiple Intelligences  
EJ527600 EC614057

Anchoring Assessment with Exemplars: Why Students and Teachers Need Models.  
Wiggins, Grant

Gifted Child Quarterly, v40 n2 p66-69 Spr 1996

Special issue: World Class Standards, Alternative Assessment and Extraordinary Performance.

ISSN: 0016-9862

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); POSITION PAPER (120)

Journal Announcement: CIJDEC96

This essay argues for the use of examples that set a clear standard for student performance and calibration of local standards to exemplars. Four types of performance criteria are proposed: impact, process, form, and content. Examples of assessment initiatives grounded in models of excellent performance are summarized.

Descriptors: \*Academic Standards; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Evaluation Criteria; \*Models; \*Performance Based Assessment; \*Student Evaluation

Identifiers: \*Exemplars of Excellence

EJ511790 EC612253

Performance-Based Assessment: A Tool for Authentic Learning and Instructional Decision Making.

Rivera, Deborah B.; And Others

Gifted Child Today Magazine, v18 n5 p34-37,40,41 Sep-Oct 1995

ISSN: 1076-2175

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); NON-CLASSROOM MATERIAL (055)

Journal Announcement: CIJFEB96

Target Audience: Teachers; Practitioners

Performance-based assessment is recommended for gifted students. In this approach, the students participate in planning the assessment and establishing the criteria by which their work is judged. Guidelines for implementing performance-based assessment and classroom examples are offered.

Descriptors: Decision Making; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Evaluation Methods; \*Gifted; \*Performance; \*Student Evaluation; Student Participation

Identifiers: \*Performance Based Evaluation

EJ508308 EC611709

Introducing Parents to Portfolio Assessment: A Collaborative Effort toward Authentic Assessment.

Kingore, Bertie

N&N Topic 8 HO 6 abstract

<http://ericec.org/faq/gt-altas.html>

Gifted Child Today Magazine, v18 n4 p12-13,40 Jul-Aug 1995

ISSN: 1076-2175

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); NON-CLASSROOM MATERIAL (055)

Journal Announcement: CIJDEC95

The use of a portfolio as a source of information about a student's attitudes, level of development, and growth over time can be a collaborative effort between the child and teacher and can increase parents' awareness of their child's abilities and needs. Selecting materials for the portfolio and different ways to use the portfolio are discussed.

Descriptors: Elementary Secondary Education; Evaluation Methods; Evaluation Utilization;

\*Portfolio Assessment; Selection; Self Evaluation (Individuals); \*Student Evaluation

EJ497608 EC610319

Developing Reliable and Valid Authentic Assessments for the Classroom: Is It Possible?

Ryser, Gail R.

Journal of Secondary Gifted Education, v6 n1 p62-66 Fall 1994

ISSN: 1047-1885

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); NON-CLASSROOM MATERIAL (055)

Journal Announcement: CIJJUN95

The meanings of reliability and validity as they apply to standardized measures are used as a framework for applying the concepts of reliability and validity to authentic assessments. This article sees reliability as scorability and stability, whereas validity is seen as students' ability to use knowledge authentically in the field.

Descriptors: Elementary Secondary Education; Evaluation Methods; \*Reliability; Standardized Tests; \*Student Evaluation; \*Test Reliability; \*Test Validity; \*Validity

Identifiers: \*Performance Based Assessment

EJ497607 EC610318

Assessment's Double Role for the Gifted.

Kress, Margaret

Journal of Secondary Gifted Education, v6 n1 p57-61 Fall 1994

ISSN: 1047-1885

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); PROJECT DESCRIPTION (141)

Journal Announcement: CIJJUN95

This article describes an authentic assessment approach used in English/language arts and mathematics with gifted students in Texas elementary and secondary schools, which focused on developing instructional experiences that challenge gifted students and documenting student progress over time. The use of portfolios was valuable for both instructional and assessment purposes. Staff development was emphasized.

Descriptors: \*Diagnostic Teaching; Elementary Secondary Education; English; \*Gifted; Inservice Teacher Education; Language Arts; Mathematics; \*Portfolio Assessment; \*Student Evaluation

Identifiers: \*Performance Based Assessment; Texas

EJ497605 EC610316

Authentic Assessment: Reducing the Fear and Trembling.

Terry, C. Ann; Pantle, Tonya T.

Journal of Secondary Gifted Education, v6 n1 p44-51 Fall 1994

ISSN: 1047-1885

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); NON-CLASSROOM MATERIAL (055);  
PROJECT DESCRIPTION (141)

Journal Announcement: CIJJUN95

This discussion of authentic assessment stresses that such assessment should be contextual (based on the context of meaning), collaborative (involves learners), and constructive (supports risk-taking). It compares tools designed for formative assessment including criteria checklists, "kidwatching," profiles, conferences, and portfolios.

Descriptors: Check Lists; Classroom Observation Techniques; Conferences; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Evaluation Methods; \*Formative Evaluation; Profiles; \*Student Evaluation; Teacher Student Relationship

Identifiers: \*Performance Based Assessment

EJ497603 EC610314

Productive Thinking: Toward Authentic Instruction and Assessment.

Treffinger, Donald J.

Journal of Secondary Gifted Education, v6 n1 p30-37 Fall 1994

ISSN: 1047-1885

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); NON-CLASSROOM MATERIAL (055)

Journal Announcement: CIJJUN95

This paper discusses a multicomponent approach to assessment of productive thinking with gifted students. It presents a model of productive thinking encompassing creative and critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making. Emphasis is on planning/profiling, instruction, evaluation, and documentation. Profiling, performance assessment, portfolios, and authentic instruction are seen as important assessment tools.

Descriptors: Creative Thinking; Critical Thinking; Decision Making; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Evaluation Methods; \*Gifted; Problem Solving; \*Productive Thinking; \*Student Evaluation; Thinking Skills

Identifiers: \*Performance Based Assessment

EJ497602 EC610313

Authentic Assessment of Problem Solving and Giftedness in Secondary School Students.

Maker, C. June

Journal of Secondary Gifted Education, v6 n1 p19-29 Fall 1994

ISSN: 1047-1885

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); NON-CLASSROOM MATERIAL (055)

Journal Announcement: CIJJUN95

This paper establishes a conceptual framework for assessing problem-solving abilities of gifted secondary students. Assessment procedures based on a continuum of problem types are described. Issues discussed include multiple types of intelligence, the use of multiple measures, sensitivity to individual differences, and assessment for the student's benefit.

Descriptors: \*Evaluation Methods; \*Gifted; Individual Differences; \*Models; \*Problem Solving;

N&N Topic 8 HO 6 abstract

<http://ericec.org/faq/gt-altas.html>

Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

N&N Topic 8 HO 6 abstract

Secondary Education; Standards; Student Development; \*Student Evaluation; Teaching Models

Identifiers: Multiple Intelligences; \*Performance Based Assessment

*ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education*

*<http://ericec.org>*

### **Identifying Gifted Adolescents Using Personality Characteristics: Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities**

Ackerman, C. M., & Paulus, L. E. (June 1997). *Identifying Gifted Adolescents Using Personality Characteristics: Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities*. *Roeper Review*, Vol. 19, (4). 02783193.

An exploratory study was conducted to determine the potential of overexcitability assessment as a method for identifying giftedness beyond traditional means. Overexcitability (i.e. an intensified way of experiencing the world) can occur in five areas: psychomotor, sensual, imaginal, intellectual, and emotional, and are assessed using the Overexcitability Questionnaire. In a group of high school students, discriminant analyses indicated that overexcitability (OE) profiles in the areas of psychomotor, intellectual, and emotional overexcitabilities differentiated between gifted and nongifted students. Approximately 35% of the nonidentified students had the same profile as the gifted subjects suggesting the potential of OE profiles for use in the identification of gifted students. Linguistic and cultural issues are discussed, as well as, the implications for research and instructional practice.

The identification of gifted individuals is an extremely difficult task. A primary reason for this is that finding appropriate measures that are reliable and valid for this purpose poses some formidable problems. One of the most critical problems in gifted identification stems from confusion in the field about what giftedness is and how it should be defined.

#### **A Brief History of Gifted Identification**

Throughout the history of gifted education, many definitions of giftedness have been proposed. Early on, Terman defined giftedness according to a single criterion, intelligence, as measured by test scores (Tannenbaum, 1991). Later, more complex definitions of giftedness were developed. These multidimensional definitions varied, with some focused on intellectual ability (Sternberg, 1985) or diverse abilities (Gardner, 1983), while others were more holistic (Belts & Neihart, 1988). A turning point for the gifted movement was Marland's (1972) definition of giftedness because it was the first to broaden the definition by including several areas not included previously: specific academic aptitude, creative or productive thinking, leadership ability, visual and performing arts, and psychomotor ability. Many others have developed multidimensional conceptualizations of giftedness including Renzulli (1978), Gardner (1983), Sternberg (1985), and Roeper (1982) that have made meaningful contributions to gifted education.

With significantly different definitions of giftedness, identification becomes difficult. Some of these definitions have specific identification procedures, for example standardized intelligence tests, cognitive processes assessment, and creative product assessment. Each of these methods identifies a certain portion

of the gifted population, but, leaves some unidentified. One aspect of gifted individuals that has received little attention in the identification process is personality characteristics. Incorporating these aspects of the gifted individual into the identification process might help identify those remaining unidentified. A method that might help the identification of gifted individuals become more complete through the examination of personality characteristics is based on Dabrowski's (1964) Theory of Positive Disintegration.

### **Overexcitability: An Alternative Conceptualization**

Overexcitabilities, a concept developed from Dabrowski's (1964) Theory of Positive Disintegration (TPD), is a method that might help make identifying gifted individuals more effective. TPD is a developmental personality theory that offers a different approach to viewing giftedness. Dabrowski's theory focuses on the critical role that intensity of human experience plays in development and specifically emphasizes the role emotions play in the potential for individual development. TPD is not a theory of giftedness, but does provide an excellent framework that can be used as a foundation for characterizing giftedness and developing a method of identification. At the same time, the instrument and research based on TPD are presently in a form that teachers are unable to use because of the lengthy nature of the questionnaire and the technicality of coding responses.

Dabrowski based his theory on clinical and biographical studies of patients, artists, writers, members of religious orders, and gifted children and adolescents (Kawczak, 1970). He noted unique developmental patterns in many talented members of society (Miller & Silverman, 1987) and became interested in "the intensity and richness of thought and feeling, vividness of imagination, moral and emotional sensitivity....[of certain members of society whose] enhanced interactions with the world...seemed to be above the common and average in intensity, duration and frequency of occurrence"(Piechowski & Cunningham, 1985, p. 154). Dabrowski (1972) emphasized the importance of emotions in development and believed we needed a theory of human development, "where emotional factors are not considered merely as unruly subordinates of reason but can acquire the dominant role of shaper of development" (p. 6).

Dabrowski introduced the concept of psychic overexcitability that he characterized as consistent over-reaction to external and internal stimuli that appeared limited to certain dimensions (Piechowski, 1975). He identified five different forms of overexcitability: psychomotor, sensual, imaginal, intellectual, and emotional (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977; Piechowski, 1975). Dabrowski hypothesized that these very intense response patterns were innate, and that increased intensity, frequency, and duration of these overexcitabilities were indicative of a greater developmental potential (Miller & Silverman, 1987). He used the term overexcitability to emphasize the intensification of mental activity as well as the differential type of responding, experiencing, and acting distinguishable as characteristic forms of expression above and beyond the norm (Piechowski, 1986; Piechowski & Colangelo, 1984).

These OEs are indicators of Developmental Potential (DP) and therefore giftedness. Dabrowski (1972) stressed the importance of emotional, imaginal, and intellectual OEs above psychomotor and sensual. Furthermore, he said that emotional OE must be at least as strong as all other OEs to reach the highest level of development. The following are descriptions of the five overexcitabilities:

Psychomotor overexcitability is characterized by an organic excess of energy which manifests itself as a love of movement, rapid speech, increased capacity to be active, impulsiveness, pressure for action, and restlessness.

Sensual overexcitability is experienced as heightened sensory pleasure and is expressed as desires for comfort and luxury, being admired and in the limelight, and as the appreciation of beautiful objects (e.g. gems, furniture), writing styles, and words. Other manifestations include simple sensory pleasures such as touching, tasting, and smelling.

Imaginational overexcitability in its purest form is expressed through vividness of imagery, rich association, use of metaphor in verbal expression, strong and sharp visualization (real or imaginary), and inventiveness. Other forms are vivid and detailed dreams or nightmares, fear of the unknown, predilection with fantasy and magic tales, and poetic creativity.

Intellectual overexcitability, is expressed as persistence in asking probing questions, avidity for knowledge, discovery, and theoretical analysis and synthesis, a sharp sense of observation, independence of thought (often expressed in criticism), symbolic thinking, and a capacity to search for knowledge and truth are all manifestations of intellectual OE. It should not to be equated with intelligence: for example, intelligence is expressed in the ability to solve math problems, intellectual OE is expressed in the love of solving them.

Emotional overexcitability is a function of the way relationships are experienced, and can be expressed as attachments to people, things, or places, or, one's relationship with oneself. Characteristic expressions include deep relationships, strong affective memory, concern with death, feelings of compassion and responsibility, depression, need for security, self-evaluation, shyness, and concern for others (Falk & Piechowski, 1991; Piechowski, 1975, 1986; Piechowski & Colangelo, 1984; Piechowski & Cunningham, 1985).

Although research in this area is only developing, those studies that have been conducted suggest that OEs are stronger in the gifted. Also, most of this research assessed OE strength using the Overexcitability Questionnaire (OEQ), a 21-item open-ended questionnaire, which is scored using content analysis. Among adults, OEs are stronger for the gifted than the nongifted (Miller, Silverman, & Falk, 1991; Piechowski & Cunningham, 1985; Silverman & Ellsworth, 1981) and similarly for children and adolescents (Gallagher, 1986;

Piechowski & Colangelo, 1984), Some OEs were found to be strongest in artists when compared with the gifted (Piechowski & Cunningham, 1985; Piechowski, Silverman, & Falk., 1985) and to have greater strength in more creative gifted adolescents than less creative ones (Schiever, 1985).

However, it is not clear from the available literature whether overexcitability profiles consistently distinguish between groups of gifted and of nongifted individuals. Even so, a relationship is indicated between giftedness and intensity of OEs in the literature that points to significantly higher scores on imaginational, intellectual, and emotional OEs (Gallagher, 1986; Piechowski & Colangelo, 1984; Piechowski & Cunningham, 1985; Piechowski et al., 1985; Silverman & Ellsworth, 1981).

On the other hand, there are several issues that have surfaced in the lines of research dealing with Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration. For example, assessing overexcitabilities appears to have potential as a method for identifying gifted individuals. Therefore, it is crucial to determine an OE profile capable of distinguishing between the gifted and nongifted: It is also necessary to explore the influences of language and culture on overexcitability scores to investigate biases in the instrument. Finally, in the collection of literature on OEs and gifted subjects, there is only one study that has compared gifted and nongifted adolescents (Gallagher, 1986); all other comparative studies have used adult subjects. It seems imperative that research be performed on school age subjects because the best time to identify the gifted is early in their development.

The purpose of this study was to examine overexcitabilities as a method of identifying gifted adolescents. This research primarily investigated which overexcitabilities best distinguish between gifted and nongifted adolescents in order to determine a gifted-profile to be used as an identification procedure. Adolescents were chosen as subjects because the OEQ requires extended written responses beyond the ability of younger students. Specific research questions were:

- Can overexcitability profiles be used to discriminate between gifted and non-gifted students?
- Are there any unidentified students with a similar OE profile to that of the gifted students?
- Are there possible linguistic and cultural biases of this method?  
Specifically: does speaking more than one language fluently influence responses? is word count (i.e. the total number of words in response to the OEQ) related to OE scores, and is cultural influence responsible for differences in overexcitability scores?

The answers to these questions may provide school districts with valuable suggestions for identifying gifted and talented students, as well as a deeper understanding of them. If some students not identified as gifted by traditional means have similar OE profiles to those identified, this would indicate that these

two groups of students have some common underlying characteristics. Those not identified as gifted could be in need of gifted programming, but, at risk of being refused.

## **Methodology**

### **Subjects**

The subjects were 79 tenth and eleventh grade students from two senior high schools in the Roman Catholic Separate School System in Calgary, Alberta. Forty-two students were identified for the gifted program using a multi-criteria approach based on Renzulli's (1977) model which assessed academic achievement and intellectual ability, creativity, and task commitment. Thirty-seven students were not identified. Teacher, parent, and self nominations created the initial pool of students to be considered. Academic grades, IQ scores, achievement test scores, nominations and recommendations, as well as statements from the students were used to determine whether a student should be included in the gifted program. A minimum IQ score of 120 was required for placement; although, allowances for lower scores were occasionally made if the student showed particular interest in the program or had a strong profile on all other components. Identification procedures also included specific criteria for each subject area.

The subjects ranged from 14 to 18 years of age. There were 10 males and 32 females in the gifted group and 20 males and 17 females in the general sample. The ethnic backgrounds of the subjects were extremely diverse and included individuals of Filipino, Polish, Croatian, Italian, and Czechoslovakian heritage, as well as many others.

### **Instruments**

The Overexcitability Questionnaire (OEQ) (Lysy & Piechowski, 1988) consists of 21 open-ended questions to be answered in written form. These questions are intended to be thought provoking and elicit varied personal responses. Some examples of the questions are: "What has been your experience of the most intense pleasure?", "What kind of physical activity (or inactivity) gives you the most satisfaction?", and "How often do you carry on arguments in your head? What sorts of subjects are these arguments about?" While the questions were initially intended to elicit a specific OE, they actually elicit whichever OEs are strongest in an individual. Completion time varies depending on how much information the subjects have to write and the amount of effort put forth.

Findings from the following studies provide evidence of construct validity for intellectual and imaginal overexcitabilities. In a research study of artists and intellectually gifted adults, imaginal OE was higher for the artists and intellectual OE was higher for the gifted adults (Piechowski et al., 1985). Among Venezuelan artists, imaginal OE was the highest of the five OEs (Manzanero, 1985). Imaginal OE has also distinguished between low-creative and high-creative seventh and eighth graders (Schiever, 1985). Gallagher (1986) showed that among a group of sixth graders, intellectual OE

distinguished between high and low scorers on the Torrance Test for Creative Thinking. Thus far, construct validity for emotional, sensual, and psychomotor OEs has not been confirmed; however, Silverman (1993) suggests that clinical data collected on gifted individuals offer some preliminary support.

Based on their findings, some of these authors make remarks regarding the use of the OEQ in schools based on their findings. Gallagher (1986) asserts that "as there is currently no other protocol which measures intelligence, creativity, and emotional sensitivity simultaneously, this instrument [the Overexcitability Questionnaire] could prove to be a valuable addition to the field" (p. 119). Schiever (1985) believes that the measurement of levels of OE could provide a new indicator of creative ability. A case can also be made for the use of the OEQ in education because it provides such rich information about each student. Additionally, many educators feel Dabrowski's concepts of OEs are useful in understanding the differences among gifted individuals, as well as, differences between the gifted and the nongifted. This understanding of individual differences is useful for purposes of programming and curriculum.

Content analysis is used to score the OEQ (Falk & Piechowski, 1991); a separate index is calculated for each of the five overexcitabilities. Each response can reflect any or all forms of overexcitability and the intensity is rated from 0, no overexcitability, to 3, a rich and intense expression. The highest possible score for each OE is 63: a score of 3 in a category for each of the 21 questions.

The questionnaires were rated by 10 raters who attended a special training seminar and tested 90% or above in agreement with the experts. All questionnaires were scored independently by two raters. The pairs of raters were shuffled several times to decrease the risk of scorer bias. To ensure that the quality of rating remained consistent, the expert raters supervised the scoring. The raters remained consistent; their quality remained at the level of their training.

In past studies using the OEQ, reaching consensus between two raters was the method used to determine scores when raters differed. However, in a study using a similar open-ended instrument, it was found that averaging the scores of the raters was comparable to reaching consensus (Miller, 1985). Since the raters were spread throughout the United States and Canada, averaging scores was deemed a more time-efficient method.

All protocols were rated by two trained individuals. Interrater reliability for the overexcitabilities were: .91 for psychomotor, .92 for sensual, .97 for imaginal, .92 for intellectual, and .91 for emotional. For each scale the reliability scores were calculated by using Pearson Product Moment Correlations (Allen & Yen, 1979) to determine the correlation between rater 1 and rater 2 for each item across all 79 cases. These correlations were averaged and then stepped-up using the Spearman-Brown Formula (Allen & Yen, 1979) to determine the interrater reliability of a scale. This procedure was followed for

each of the five overexcitability scales. The internal consistency for each scale as measured by Cronbach's Alpha was: .57 for psychomotor, .42 for sensual, .63 for imaginal, .72 for intellectual, and .77 for emotional.

A brief demographic questionnaire was used to gather information about the subjects' age, gender, spoken language(s) and language preference, their cultural background(s), and the number of generations their families had been in Canada. Questions regarding current or previous participation or opportunity to participate in the gifted program were included.

### **Data Analysis**

To determine which of the OEs had the greatest discriminating power between the gifted and non-gifted students, a stepwise discriminant function analysis was performed. The dependent variable was classification as gifted or nongifted and the independent variables were the five OE scores. A subsequent classificatory analysis was performed to ascertain the number of students in the nongifted group that had similar OE profiles to those in the gifted group. Additionally, Pearson's Product Moment correlations were performed between OEs and cultural influence (number of generations the family has been in Canada), and word count (total number of words in the response protocol). A Point-Biserial correlation was performed between the OEs and linguistic ability (the number of languages fluently spoken) because of the dichotomous nature of one variable.

### **Procedure**

At the beginning of class, the researcher presented a brief explanation of the study that included information about its purpose, time commitment, confidentiality issues, and basic instructions. The questionnaire's non-threatening, non-judgmental nature was emphasized. This address was followed by a brief question and answer period.

The researcher gave each student a package complete with a consent form, demographic questionnaire, Overexcitability Questionnaire, instruction sheet, and a coded envelope for the confidential return of their information. Once distribution was completed, the students were given the remaining class time to work on the questionnaire package, approximately 55 minutes. They were instructed to complete the package for homework if the remaining class time was not sufficient. The packages were to be returned within the following week with the signed consent forms. The majority of students finished during the 55 minute class period.

### **Results**

The mean OE scores for the gifted and nongifted groups are presented in Figure 1. The means and standard deviations for both groups are: Gifted - psychomotor 7.93, 3.3; sensual 2.71, 2.0; imaginal 6.79, 3.8; intellectual 8.39, 4.2; emotional 11.94, 6.3 and Nongifted - psychomotor 5.08, 2.3; sensual 2.09, 2.0; imaginal 4.64, 2.6; intellectual 5.77, 3.3; emotional 9.15, 4.4. The gifted group show higher scores than the nongifted group for all five forms of OE.

The discriminant analysis identified three OEs as discriminating between the two groups: psychomotor, intellectual, and emotional. Wilk's Lambda, a measure of group discrimination, was minimized from .80 in Step 1 to .71 in Step 3. The optimal prediction equation in standardized form was:  $D = .80z + .44z + .35z$  for psychomotor, intellectual, and emotional OEs respectively. The mean discriminant function scores were .59 for the gifted group, and -.67 for the nongifted group. The result of a Bartlett's Chi Square Test indicated that the two groups were significantly separated by the discriminant function,  $\chi^2 = 25.73$ ,  $p < .001$ . Examination of the structure coefficients (correlations between the discriminant function and the predictor variables) indicated that subjects who scored high on the discriminant function were characterized by higher ratings of psychomotor, intellectual, and emotional OE. The structure coefficients also indicated that psychomotor OE best discriminated between the two groups followed by intellectual and emotional OEs. Therefore, this sample of gifted students could be described as being more energetic, having more drive, exhibiting more movement and chattering, being more emotionally sensitive, having stronger relationships and attachments, more intellectual curiosity, and a greater need for intellectual challenge than those not identified as gifted.

Classificatory analysis performed at the end of the discriminant analysis indicated that a total of 70.9% of all subjects were correctly classified using psychomotor, intellectual, and emotional OE scores; that is, into the groups the schools had placed them. However, 23 subjects were classified incorrectly: 13 of the 37 (35.1%) nongifted subjects were classified as gifted and 10 of the 42 (23.8%) gifted subjects were classified as nongifted.

For the analyses of possible cultural and linguistic influences on the OEQ, linguistic ability was defined as the number of languages a subject reported speaking fluently. In the total sample, some spoke only English, while others spoke two to five languages, including Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Czechoslovakian, Dutch, Filipino, Inuit, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The distribution for the number of spoken languages for the gifted and nongifted groups was as follows: one language, 22 and 23; two languages, 9 and 10; three, 9 and 3; four, 2 and 0, respectively. Information for one nongifted subject was missing. Two groups were created those who spoke only one language and those speaking more than one language: 52.4% of the gifted group spoke one language and 47.6% spoke more than one. In the nongifted group, 63.9% spoke one language while 36.1% spoke more than one language.

The correlations between the five OEs and linguistic ability, for the total, gifted, and nongifted samples, resulted in only two that were significant,  $p < .05$  (see Table - 1): emotional OE showed a weak negative correlation with linguistic ability for the total sample,  $r = .24$ , and the gifted sample,  $r = .37$ . No other correlations were significant.

The cultural background of the sample was diverse. A total of 31 different cultural backgrounds from four continents, Europe, Asia, North America, and South America, were represented. The measure used for cultural influence was generation Canadian, which ranged from immigrant status to fifth generation; those subjects whose families are newer to the country were considered more culturally influenced than those whose families had been in Canada for a longer period of time. The distribution of generational information for the gifted and nongifted groups was as follows: Immigrant, 4 and 1; first generation, 20 and 13; second, 9 and 7; third, 4 and 9; fourth, 4 and 3; and fifth, 2 and 0, respectively. Data from four nongifted subjects were missing.

The correlations between the five OEs and cultural influence, for the total, gifted, and nongifted samples, also resulted in only two that were significant,  $p < .05$ : emotional OE showed a weak correlation with cultural influence for the total sample,  $r = -.25$ , and the gifted sample,  $r = -.33$ . No other correlations were significant.

The total number of words, or word count, from all 21 responses was used as the unit of measurement for length of response. The correlations between the five OEs and word count for the total, gifted, and nongifted samples, resulted in several that were significant (all but one at the  $p < .001$ ) with several in the moderate and strong range (see Table - 1).

### **Discussion**

The Discriminant Function Analysis performed on the total sample indicated that three forms of overexcitability created a profile able to discriminate between gifted subjects and nongifted subjects; elevated scores on psychomotor, intellectual, and emotional OEs. Psychomotor OE contributed most strongly to differentiation between the two groups. The second highest contributor was intellectual OE, and emotional OE was the smallest contributor included in the discriminant function.

These findings are not entirely consistent with the literature which suggests (Dabrowski, 1972; Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977) that higher scores on emotional, intellectual, and imaginal OEs in gifted samples, as compared to nongifted ones, are the differentiating factors for the two groups. The current findings are consistent with two of the three OEs. Earlier studies, (Gallagher, 1986; Lysy & Piechowski, 1983; Piechowski & Miller, 1994; Piechowski & Colangelo, 1984; Silverman & Ellsworth, 1981), found emotional, intellectual, and imaginal OEs, in varying order, to be the highest three OEs for their gifted subjects. Therefore, even though emotional and intellectual OEs were the highest scores and were also identified as discriminating between the two groups in the current study, psychomotor OE was identified as the OE that most differentiated between the gifted and nongifted samples.

The discriminating influence of psychomotor OE might be understood in light of a theoretical point that receives little attention: Psychomotor and sensual OEs

alone cannot promote development to the higher levels, and if excessively strong, can even inhibit development. However, when combined with other forms of OE, they can contribute positively to development (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977). For example, at low levels of development, psychomotor OE is expressed as "violent irritability and uncontrolled temper with easy return to equilibrium,...impulsive actions,...juvenile delinquency..."(Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977, p. 114) while at higher levels of development it becomes subordinate to the higher OE forms, i.e. emotional, intellectual, and imagination-al, and provides the necessary energy to execute a developmental program of action (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977). Therefore, psychomotor OE, while not as strong, seems to play an essential role in the life of a more developed individual because it provides the energy necessary to act and persevere.

Based on this information regarding psychomotor OE, the results are more consistent with the theory than initial analysis indicates: Although psychomotor OE is the best discriminator between the gifted and nongifted groups, it has the third highest mean score after emotional and intellectual. Other researchers have commented on the possible relationship psychomotor OE has to giftedness and development. According to Gallagher (1986), "... high levels of activity and energy ... may be connected with giftedness" (p. 118). In a recent article, Tolan (1994) suggests that, "if the definition of psychomotor [overexcitability] ... were expanded to specifically include physical energy generated by intellectual or creative activity, . . . [it] might be seen to be more common to the gifted than previously believed" (p.77).

The importance of psychomotor OE in this study may be the result of the age of the sample used. In two studies (Gallagher, 1986; Schiever, 1985) with subjects between the ages of 12-14, the OE profiles included elevated intellectual, imaginal, and psychomotor. Therefore, psychomotor OE may be more important in adolescence than in adulthood. Another explanation could be that as an individual reaches higher levels of development, the OEs become more integrated, and in the case of psychomotor OE, it becomes subordinate to the others. Therefore, it would likely be harder to detect the presence of psychomotor OE based on the rating criteria of the OEQ. Typical responses are rated as psychomotor OE include "rapid speech, marked excitation, intense physical activity (e.g. fast games and sports), pressure for action (e.g. organizing), marked competitiveness ... compulsive talking and chattering, impulsive actions" (Falk, Piechowski, Lind, 1994, p. 9) all of which reflect easily identified behaviors, not the role psychomotor OE plays when integrating with the other OEs. However, there were two other studies using adolescent subjects where psychomotor OE was not one of the top three in the overexcitability profile (Piechowski & Miller, 1994; Piechowski & Colangelo, 1984).

In the current study, 13 of the 37 (35.1%) nongifted students were classified as gifted. This suggests that there are some students in the sample that have not been identified as gifted based on their I.Q. scores, peer, teacher, and parent nominations, and school grades, although, these students have personality

characteristics similar to those students who were identified as gifted. Personality characteristics in this sense refer to psychomotor, intellectual, and emotional OEs, which are included in the discriminant function coefficient. Thus, it is possible that approximately 35% of the non-gifted students could be gifted based on the classificatory analysis results.

The classificatory analysis also indicated that a number of gifted subjects were misclassified. That is, their OE profiles were more similar to the nongifted profile than the gifted profile. Of the gifted students, 23.8% (10 of 42) matched the nongifted profile more closely. Therefore, while the score on the OEQ might be able to identify some students as gifted that would not have been identified based on the methods used in their school, it should serve as an additional measure, and not a replacement for current methods.

One of the most important findings in this study was that based on OEQ scores and profiles, 35% of the nongifted subjects matched the gifted profile based on statistical analyses. This provides some support to the notion that an additional method of identification is necessary and that the Overexcitability Questionnaire could be useful for this purpose. While there were also 24% of the gifted subjects with profiles similar to that of the nongifted, this point is not as important to the current study, because these individuals would already have been identified.

Investigating possible linguistic biases showed that for the total sample, word count was significantly correlated with all five forms of overexcitability. Generally, those subjects who wrote lengthy responses to the OEQ questions had higher scores than those subjects who wrote short responses. However, while long responses are more likely to result in higher OE scores than short responses, brief answers also result in elevated OE scores and a long response does not guarantee high OE scores. Variance in OE scores resulting from word count ranged from 5% to 48% with a mean of 26%. Even for emotional OE, which had the highest correlation with word count, length of response accounts for less than half the variance in OE scores.

Among correlations between OE scores and spoken language ability, the only significant correlation was between emotional OE and language ability, for the total sample. However, the extremely low correlation for the non-gifted group between emotional OE and language ability ( $r = .03$ ) made no contribution to the correlation for the total sample. Therefore, the only meaningful relationship is for the gifted group ( $r = .37$ ). The positive correlation would indicate that those subjects who were fluent in only one language received lower emotional OE scores on average than those who were multilingual, especially for the gifted group.

The results of correlations between cultural influence and OE scores indicated that only one was significant. For the gifted group, the correlation between cultural influence and emotional OE was  $r = -.33$ . Therefore, the longer a gifted subject's family spent in Canada, the lower the emotional OE score.

Since this is the first study to address cultural and linguistic influences, the correlational analyses should be considered in that light. Some methodological considerations are: The subjects were all from private Roman Catholic high schools restricting religious representation. The diversity of cultural backgrounds is not a common phenomenon. Also, the unbalanced number of males and females in the gifted group could have influenced the results.

Another set of considerations that should be mentioned relate to the questionnaire itself. The questions are currently under review to determine if it will be possible to decrease their number and still get reliable results (N.B. Miller, personal communication. April 2, 1993). These discussions focus on the validity of individual questions; and whether they are tapping all OEs effectively.

Even with the possible methodological concerns, there is still a great deal of valuable information that can be used as the starting point for further research. One of the main purposes of an exploratory study is to set the groundwork for future investigations.

The results indicated that gifted subjects were differentiated from their nongifted peers based on their higher psychomotor, intellectual, and emotional OE scores. While this was an unexpected finding, it clearly illustrates that scores on the OEQ can differentiate between gifted and nongifted students. Because of the central part psychomotor OE played in the analysis, which has not been noted in previous studies, it is important that further research be conducted to verify these findings.

Investigating some of the possible limitations of the OEQ proved to be useful. While the overwhelming number of high positive correlations between word count and OE scores must be replicated, it does have implications for the administration of the instrument. Emphasizing the importance of writing as much as possible and imposing no time constraints would be helpful. The OEQ can be administered in oral form. Research shows that responses with higher psychomotor OE scores and lower emotional OE scores are given on oral administration compared with the written form (Piechowski & Miller, 1995). Piechowski and Miller also report that the majority of subjects in their study, between the ages of 9 and 14, preferred the oral form. They also recommend that the oral form be used with children below the age of 11. One major difficulty with the oral administration is the amount of time required to administer and transcribe responses.

The investigation of language ability and cultural influence biases in this study were not very informative. It is possible that different cultures will show different OE profiles. Perhaps in the more typically expressive cultures there would be an elevated emotional OE score. Manzanero (1985) found that samples of Venezuelan and American artists had similar OE profiles. However, a series of independent studies performed on diverse cultures would elucidate this issue.

Another consideration for this line of research is its practicality for use by teachers in classrooms. The Overexcitability Questionnaire can provide useful qualitative information for teachers about their students, but, it is not tenable as a quantitative assessment instrument in its present form. Further research must work toward creating a version of the OEQ that is not only theoretically and statistically sound, but also realistic for widespread school use.

The most important contribution of this study is its indication that the assessment of overexcitabilities can be a viable additional identification method for giftedness. Further research is necessary to determine the most appropriate uses for this method as well as the specific profiles that can be used for identification purposes. The differentiating power of psychomotor OE scores in this study would be one place to begin.

### **Implications for Practice**

There are several implications for education that arise from Dabrowski's theory and the related research, some of which are theoretical and some that are more practical. Dabrowski's theory of Positive Disintegration offers a new conceptualization of giftedness that may be useful in the classroom. While behaviors are easily observed, it is often difficult to determine the motivation behind them. Using overexcitabilities as a lens, a student's behavior can, perhaps, be reframed; for example, if children are not attending to the lesson it is possible that they have an attentional disorder, however, it is also possible that their intellectual and imaginal overexcitabilities are working on a problem more personally relevant or simply more interesting. The second explanation describes children who are differentially attending while the first describes children who are not attending.

An extremely important contribution this theory offers to parents and educators is that individuals may have any combination of overexcitabilities which may contribute to the understanding of individual differences. This might help parents and educators understand that gifted individuals are not homogeneous, they are different from each other in many respects, overexcitabilities being only one. Perhaps this information may promote more tolerance and understanding of these differences.

Data from the Overexcitability Questionnaire can also provide information valuable for gifted programming and curriculum design. Since the OEQ is an open-ended instrument, a wealth of qualitative information for each student is available in their responses. Responses include most exciting experiences, things that make them think, activities they find most satisfying, and other similar information. Teachers could incorporate these findings into their lessons to improve the likelihood that students will actively participate.

This research study also has implications for the identification of gifted students in school. Most generally, overexcitabilities have been shown to differentiate between gifted and non-identified students in high school where the gifted have

higher scores on all forms of overexcitabilities. This means that if teachers were trained to recognize characteristics of overexcitabilities in their students, some students who would normally go unidentified, might be identified in this manner.

Currently, the Overexcitability Questionnaire is not tenable as a quantitative assessment instrument, in its present form. Its main drawbacks are the length of administration time, the level of writing skills and expressive language, and the cost of scoring or training to become a rarer. Further research must work toward creating a version of the Overexcitability Questionnaire that is not only theoretically and statistically sound, but also realistic for widespread school use to serve as an identification instrument that would ensure a diversity of high ability students in the gifted classroom.

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Mean Overexcitability Scores for Gifted and Non-Gifted Groups

|               | Gifted | Nonidentified |
|---------------|--------|---------------|
| Psychomotor   | 7.93   | 5.08          |
| Sensual       | 2.71   | 2.09          |
| Imaginational | 6.79   | 4.64          |
| Intellectual  | 8.39   | 5.77          |
| Emotional     | 11.94  | 9.15          |

Figure 1

Correlation of Overexcitability Scores with Linguistic Ability, Cultural Influence, and Word Content for the Total Sample

Legend for Chart:

- A - Psychomotor
- B - Sensual
- C - Imaginational
- D - Intellectual
- E - Emotional

|                       |       |       |       |       |          |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------|
| Linguistic Ability[a] | -0.07 | 0.03  | -0.04 | 0.14  | 0.24[b]  |
| Gifted                | -0.15 | 0.00  | 0.07  | 0.23  | 0.37[a]  |
| Nongifted             | -0.13 | -0.13 | -0.11 | -0.07 | -0.03    |
| Cultural Influence[a] | 0.06  | 0.13  | -0.01 | 0.00  | -0.25[b] |
| Gifted                | 0.13  | 0.11  | 0.00  | -0.01 | -0.33[b] |
| Nongifted             | 0.13  | -0.10 | 0.11  | 0.11  | -0.02    |

|               |         |      |         |         |         |
|---------------|---------|------|---------|---------|---------|
| Word Count[a] | 0.33[c] | 0.22 | 0.46[c] | 0.57[c] | 0.71[c] |
| Gifted        | 0.12    | 0.15 | 0.35[a] | 0.47[c] | 0.64[c] |
| Nongifted     | 0.21    | 0.21 | 0.43[c] | 0.58[c] | 0.80[c] |

a total sample correlations, [a] :  $p < .05$ , [\*]:  $p < .001$

Table 1

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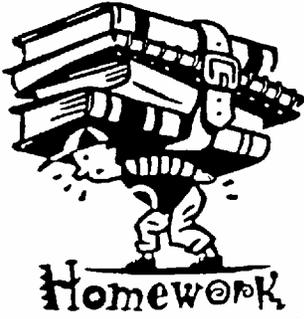
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Cheryl M. Ackerman

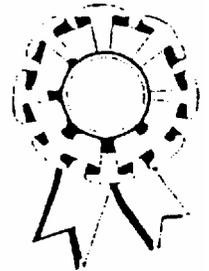
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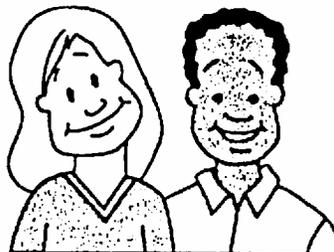
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# THE GIFTED CHILD



## CASE STUDY



### **Nature and Needs of the Gifted Case Study for Plan A Student**

Author. (n.d.). *Nature and Needs of the Gifted: Case Study for Plan A Student*.

#### Gathering Background Information

Review Psychological WISC III Rev. or Stanford Binet  
Review SAT/FCAT scores  
Review report card(s) / compare subjects  
Review Psychologist report

Write a paper that discusses and relates to the review data.  
Use a data base or table to list significant scores  
Write your professional response and reaction

*NOTE: Do not use the student's real name. If copies of student documents are included, whiteout the student's name. Make sure their identities remain anonymous.*

### **Case Study Guidelines Nature and Needs**

#### **DATA**

After examining pertinent data related to the child, write a one/two page typed synopsis summarizing the information you have gathered. Be sure to note characteristics commonly attributed to gifted children. Include the following documents in this section:

Interest Inventory  
Parent Observation Checklist or Observations  
Renzulli Scale for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students  
Screening Instrument Scores (K-Bit or Slosson)  
Score on WISC-IIIIR or Stanford Binet Subtest scores on SAT or similar achievement test

#### **OBSERVATIONS**

Arrange to observe this child in a classroom setting. Take anecdotal notes. Using these notes, write a reflective piece indicating why this child shows evidence of being a gifted child. Include evidence of academic, social and emotional characteristics.

#### **WORK SAMPLES**

Collect 3-5 work samples from this child and submit copies (or photos). Indicate qualities of giftedness evidenced in this child's work.

*IEP or EP*

After reviewing the information on this child, write an IEP/EP indicating goals, objectives, and PLP that would enable this child to meet success in an academic setting.

Note: Be sure to white out all names to ensure confidentiality.

One of the abilities that individuals acquire during adolescence is the capacity to examine themselves somewhat objectively. In other words, adolescents and adults may be capable of reflecting on and evaluating their own behavior. In this activity you will need to use that ability.

The accompanying *Self-Concept Questionnaire* contains a list of statements. Decide to what extent each statement is reflective of you, using the following scale as a guide: Strongly agree, Somewhat agree, Cannot say, Somewhat disagree, or Strongly disagree

Write the number that reflects the extent of your agreement before each statement on the questionnaire.

*Self-Concept Questionnaire*

- |                                     |                                      |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| _____ I am a tall person            | _____ I am a trusting person.        |
| _____ I am an impulsive person      | _____ I am a good athlete            |
| _____ I am a good son/daughter      | _____ I am a good sister or brother. |
| _____ I am a creative person        | _____ I am a healthy person          |
| _____ I am a hard worker            | _____ I am a loyal friend.           |
| _____ I am a happy person           | _____ I am an understanding person.  |
| _____ I am a responsible person     | _____ I am a self-motivated person.  |
| _____ I am a relaxed person.        | _____ I am a submissive person.      |
| _____ I am a secure person.         | _____ I am a good sport.             |
| _____ I am a good student.          | _____ I am a trustworthy person.     |
| _____ I have a good sense of humor. | _____ I am an independent person.    |
| _____ I am an honest person         | _____ I am a good athlete            |
| _____ I am a trusting person.       | _____ I am a capable person.         |

After completing the questionnaire, answer the following questions.  
Did you have any difficulty in filling out the questionnaire? Explain.

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How has your self-concept changed over the last few years? Why do you think this has happened?

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Dear Parents,

In an effort to learn more about your child who is in my room and his/her learning style, please complete and return the survey below.

**DIRECTIONS:** Please place a check next to the statement that applies to your child.

He/She decides what to wear to school every day.

He/She doesn't mind being different from others.

He/She has a sense of humor.

He/She does better in reading than math.

He/She has a good memory.

He/She understands directions.

He/She sees everything that is happening.

He/She gets excited about new ideas.

He/She asks a lot of questions.

He/She learns new things quickly and easily.

He/She likes to learn things on his/her own.

He/She takes things very seriously.

He/She has good coordination.

He/She has a wild and vivid imagination.

He/She likes to make gifts for others.

He/She doesn't like change of any kind.

He/She has confidence in himself/herself.

He/She gets along well with other children his/her age.

He/She shows good judgment and/or common sense.

He/She is responsible and dependable.

He/She gets along well with other children his/her age.

He/She shows good judgment and/or common sense.

He/She is responsible and dependable.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. This tool will help me develop my teaching program to better suit your child's learning style. With using this, we all will win in the long run.

Sincerely

Pre-interview with student:

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Post-interview with teacher:

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Parental Interview:

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Reaction:

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# Nature and Needs of the Gifted

## Gifted Endorsement Module

### TOPIC 9 – REFERRAL AND ELIGIBILITY

**KEY QUESTION:** How do you find them?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Explain the referral and identification process in your district. Consider the roles of students, parents, and school personnel.
- Define the criteria for gifted eligibility and placement.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- district referral process
- district identification process
- student's role in procedures
- parent's role in procedures
- school personnel's role in procedures
- gifted Eligibility Criteria
- gifted Placement

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Clark: *Growing Up Gifted* Review pp 319-340
- Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) State Rule for Gifted as per Chapter 6A-6.03019 (HO 1)
- ERIC Document: Student Selection for Gifted/Talented Programs (updated May 2000) (HO 2)
- District Documents: Special Policies and Procedures

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Discuss implications of district referral and identification documents and cross reference them to the ERIC document. Consider use of T-chart.
- Cross-reference and discuss those district procedures that support the implementation of the State Rule for Gifted.
- Create a PowerPoint presentation composed of the salient points of the referral and identification process that could be used during a parent night at school.
- Facilitate a Jigsaw Discussion on the Eric document.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- active participation in class discussion and/or completed T-chart
- active participation in class discussion
- completed PowerPoint presentation. Evaluate as per class-created criteria
- active participation in class jigsaw discussion

**RESOURCES:**

- *Florida Administrative Code* (F.A.C.) State Rule for Gifted as per Chapter 6A-6.03019 <http://fac.dos.state.fl.us/faconline/chapter06.pdf> (pages 152-153)
- School District's *Special Policies and Procedures* as they relate to gifted.

## Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

- ERIC Document: “Student Selection for Gifted/Talented Programs” (updated May 2000) <http://ericec.org/faq/gt-idpar.html>
- District’s documents related to the gifted referral and identification process.

### **6A-6.03019 Special Instructional Programs for Students who are Gifted**

Author. (n.d.) *Special instructional programs for students who are gifted*. Florida Administrative Code. Retrived from <http://fac.dos.state.fl.us/faconline/chapter06.pdf>

(1) Gifted. One who has superior intellectual development and is capable of high performance.

(2) Criteria for eligibility. A student is eligible for special instructional programs for the gifted if the student meets the criteria under paragraph (2)(a) or (b) of this rule.

(a) The student demonstrates:

1. Need for a special program.
2. A majority of characteristics of gifted students according to a standard scale or checklist, and
3. Superior intellectual development as measured by an intelligence quotient of two (2) standard deviations or more above the mean on an individually administered standardized test of intelligence.

(b) The student is a member of an under-represented group and meets the criteria specified in an approved school district plan for increasing the participation of under-represented groups in programs for gifted students.

1. For the purpose of this rule, under-represented groups are defined as groups:

- a. Who are limited English proficient, or
  - b. Who are from a low socio-economic status family.
2. The Department of Education is authorized to approve school district plans for increasing the participation of students from under-represented groups in special instructional programs for the gifted, provided these plans include the following:
- a. A district goal to increase the percent of students from under-represented groups in programs for the gifted and the current status of the district in regard to that goal;
  - b. Screening and referral procedures which will be used to increase the number of these students referred for evaluation;
  - c. Criteria for determining eligibility based on the student's demonstrated ability or potential in specific areas of leadership, motivation, academic performance, and creativity;
  - d. Student evaluation procedures, including the identification of the measurement instruments to be used;
  - e. Instructional program modifications or adaptations to ensure successful and continued participation of students from under-represented groups in the existing instructional program for gifted students;

f. An evaluation design which addresses evaluation of progress toward the district's goal for increasing participation by students from under-represented groups.

(3) Procedures for student evaluation. The minimum evaluations for determining eligibility are the following:

- (a) Need for a special instructional program,
- (b) Characteristics of the gifted,
- (c) Intellectual development, and
- (d) May include those evaluation procedures specified in an approved district plan to increase the participation of students from under-represented groups in programs for the gifted.

(4) This rule shall take effect July 1, 1977.

*Specific Authority 229.053(1), 230.23(4)(m) FS. Law Implemented 228.041(18), (19), 229.565(2)(b), (c), 230.23(4)(m) FS. History—New 7-1-77, Formerly 6A-6.3019, Amended 10-10-91, 5-19-98, 7-14-02.*

### **Student Selection for Gifted/Talented Programs (updated May 2000)**

Author. (May 2000). Student Selection for Gifted/Talented Programs.  
Retrieved from <http://ericec.org/faq/gt-idpar.html>

*My child is being tested for the gifted program in his school. He is 8 and in second grade. How are students selected for gifted programs? He recently took the Cognitive Abilities Test (COGAT) and scored 99% nationwide in nonverbal and a little lower in other areas. What does this mean?*

*My child is going to be tested for the gifted program. What determines if a child is gifted? Is it based on IQ alone?*

States and school districts have a wide variety of policies and use a wide variety of instruments, screening mechanisms, and procedures to identify gifted students. Each state, and in some cases each school district, establishes the criteria for identification of students as gifted. In part this is because federal regulation (*Marland Report*, 1972) established a definition and further refined it by describing the population as "those for whom the regular curriculum is not appropriate" leaving it to the states to determine the population. The definition has changed somewhat over the years, but conceptually it remains the same. The variety of policies explains why a youngster might be found to be eligible for gifted services in one school district but not need services in another district. This phenomenon often leads parents to state skeptically that their child was gifted but isn't anymore.

States can generally be described as falling into one of three gifted education categories:

1. **States that mandate gifted education, identification, and/or programming.** These states generally have written policies and regulations that define the mandate and guide identification and programming decisions. Their policies and regulations may define giftedness and establish specific criteria for student identification.
2. **States that provide school districts with a definition, but leave it to the school district to establish criteria for identification and/or services.** If identification decisions are made at the state level, the state might define some criteria that local school districts must follow. In such cases, state policies might require school districts to use more than one instrument or test score so that a student is never eliminated from a candidate pool on the basis of one measure or score.
3. **States that do not mandate gifted education and do not have policies or regulations in this area.** Where gifted education is not mandated, local school districts may provide programming or services and make

decisions autonomously. It is more likely, however, that if gifted education is not mandated, the school districts will not provide special programs or services for children who are gifted.

Parents and educators usually find it helpful to understand which of the above categories describes their state policy and to obtain any state or local documents that describe the gifted population or programs and services for the gifted. To locate information on identification/screening procedures used by school districts, contact any or all of the following:

The person responsible for gifted education in your state. A list is available on this web site at <http://ericec.org/fact/stateres.html>

- A state advocacy group (included on the above list) or a local advocacy group. Local advocacy groups might be found by asking the state group or your child's school, or by searching citizen testimony before the school board. (Parents and teachers should consider becoming members of state or local advocacy groups because these groups are the link to policy makers.)
- Local school district offices that are responsible for student assessment—for example, the counseling or student services department. Ask what tests and procedures are used to select students for gifted programs.

## Testing

Many school districts use standardized tests to identify gifted students. These instruments can assess a wide variety of capabilities, aptitudes, or scholastic abilities, including abstract thinking skills, academic skills, artistic ability, creative thinking/creativity, general acquired knowledge, intellectual ability, leadership, motivation, nonverbal/verbal reasoning, and problem solving ability. Examples of specific tests include the Cognitive Abilities Test (COGAT), Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales (GATES), the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students, the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (K-ABC), or Raven's Progressive Matrices. Some states have developed their own assessments; for example, ASSETS: A Survey of Students: Educational Talents and Skills has been developed by the Grand Rapids Public Schools in Michigan. Most of these tests are not considered IQ tests. Like all assessments, IQ tests vary in what they measure. However, IQ tests are usually given individually; those that are given individually are generally the most comprehensive and most reliable. The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) and the Stanford-Binet are examples of individually administered tests. They are administered to individuals, not groups, by a licensed psychologist or practitioner. Specific information on tests is located at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation (<http://ericae.net/testcol.htm>).

### **Additional Measures**

Often included in broad screening for a gifted program are parent and teacher checklists or recommendations, peer/student recommendations, a child's school work in a portfolio, and other checklists or rating scales of behavioral characteristics. It is important for local districts to make sure that such lists are valid and appropriate for their intended use with the district's student population.

Following are links to related ERIC Digests, Internet resources, and Internet discussion groups, as well as selected citations from the ERIC database and the search terms we used to find the citations.

- [ERIC Digests](http://ericec.org/digests/prodfly.html) (<http://ericec.org/digests/prodfly.html>)
- [E476: Giftedness and the Gifted: What's It All About?](http://ericec.org/digests/prodfly.html)
- [Internet Resources](http://ericec.org/faq/gt-urls.html) (<http://ericec.org/faq/gt-urls.html>)
- [Internet Discussion Groups](http://ericec.org/gifted.html) (<http://ericec.org/gifted.html>)

EJ558173 EA534294

#### **Ability Testing, Instruction, and Assessment of Achievement: Breaking Out of the Vicious Cycle.**

Sternberg, Robert J.

Publication Date: 1998

Journal Citation: NASSP Bulletin; v82 n595 p4-10 Feb 1998

Publication Type: 080; 143

ISSN-0192-6365

Language: English

A large-scale study identified 199 high school students as gifted analytically, creatively, and/or practically and enrolled them in a summer class in psychology. Students receiving instruction that better matched their ability patterns outperformed those who received nonmatching instruction.

Identifying students for creative and practical strengths greatly expanded the pool of "bright" students. Revamped assessment and teaching practices would inspire more students to higher achievement levels.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; \*Achievement Tests; \*Creativity; Gifted; High School Students; High Schools; \*Instruction; \*Intelligence Tests

Identifiers: Analytic Ability; \*Practical Knowledge; \*Sternberg Triarchic Abilities Test

EJ554809 TM520603

#### **Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the K-ABC with Gifted Referrals.**

Cameron, Leslie C.; Ittenbach, Richard F.; McGrew, Kevin S.; Harrison, Patti L.; Taylor, Lynn R.; Hwang, Y. Robin

Educational and Psychological Measurement, v57 n5 p823-40 Oct 1997

ISSN: 0013-1644

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143)

Journal Announcement: CIJAPR98

Four models of intellectual abilities were evaluated using confirmatory factor analysis and data from 197 children referred for a gifted program who took the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (K-ABC). All four models were a possible fit, but the best understanding came from a model posited on a theory of fluid-crystallized abilities.

Descriptors: \*Children; Cognitive Ability; \*Gifted; \*Intelligence; Intelligence Tests; \*Models; \*Referral Identifiers: \*Confirmatory Factor Analysis; Crystallized Intelligence; Fluid Intelligence; \*Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children

EJ527624 EC614102

**IQ: Easy to Bash, Hard to Replace.**

Pyryt, Michael C.

Roeper Review, v18 n4 p255-58 Jun 1996

ISSN: 0278-3193

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); POSITION PAPER (120)

Journal Announcement: CIJDEC96

This article examines psychometric analysis regarding the viability and limits of IQ testing in the context of "The Bell Curve." It discusses eyeball analysis versus item analysis, mean differences, validity coefficients, general intelligence, and IQ and gifted education, and urges a search for intrapersonal and environmental catalysts that lead to the development of academic talents.

Descriptors: \*Cognitive Measurement; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted; Intelligence Differences; \*Intelligence Quotient; \*Intelligence Tests; Measurement Techniques; \*Psychometrics; Talent Development; Test Validity Identifiers: \*Bell Curve (Herrnstein and Murray)

EJ521554 EC613343

**Exploring the WISC-III as a Measure of Giftedness.**

Fishkin, Anne S.; And Others

Roeper Review, v18 n3 p226-31 Feb-Mar 1996

ISSN: 0278-3193

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143)

Journal Announcement: CIJAUG96

This study investigated patterns of Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) Third Edition subtest scores for 42 gifted children in grades 4-8. Variability from subtest means was highest on Similarities, Comprehension, Coding, and Symbol Search subtests. Significant weaknesses were found on the Block Design subtest, seen as a peak subtest for gifted students on earlier WISC tests.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Cluster Analysis; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted; \*Intelligence Tests; Measurement Techniques; Scores;

Test Items; Test Reliability; \*Test Validity Identifiers: \*Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children III

ED400262 TM025143

**For Whom Does "The Bell Curve" Toll"? It Tolls for You.**

Sternberg, Robert J.

16 Jun 1995

29p.; Elam Lecture presented at the EdPress Conference (Washington, DC, June 16, 1995).

EDRS Price - MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.

Language: English

Document Type: Position Paper (120); Conference Paper (150)

Geographic Source: U.S.; Connecticut

Journal Announcement: RIEFEB97

Although British psychologist Francis Galton lost the battle for the definition of intelligence in his own time, his views live on in the work of Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray. They argue that the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is an adequate measure of intelligence, and that IQ is highly heritable. They contend that there are racial and ethnic group differences in intelligence, and that these matter for society. They further believe that tests have been and should be a gating mechanism because they tell who will be better and who will be worse in a variety of pursuits. Their ideas, however, deserve more scrutiny than influence. Herrnstein and Murray ignore the large body of research that says IQ is not the be-all and end-all that they make it out to be. They imply that psychologists are in fundamental agreement on what intelligence really is, but, in fact, psychologists continue to debate the nature of intelligence. There are racial differences in IQ, but are these really differences in intelligence? Herrnstein and Murray vastly underestimate the socialization effects of schooling, home, and community. Even if intelligence does have a degree of heritability, as it most likely does, this does not mean that it cannot be increased. It is regrettable that the main message of "The Bell Curve" is so intellectually corrupt, because there are points in the book that are worthy of discussion. These include society's undervaluing of the intellectually gifted, the degrading of textbooks as opposed to the raising of standards, and the failure of affirmative action to accomplish all it promised.

Descriptors: Affirmative Action; \*Educational Testing; Ethnic Groups; Genetics; Gifted; \*Heredity; \*Intelligence; Intelligence Quotient; Intelligence Tests; Minority Groups; \*Nature Nurture Controversy; Psychological Testing; Psychologists; \*Racial Differences; Socialization; \*Test Use; Textbook  
Content Identifiers: \*Bell Curve (Herrnstein and Murray)

ED387503 TM023654

**On the Relevance of Intelligence: Applications for Classrooms?  
Intelligence Testing: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly.**

Law, Nancy

Apr 1995

12p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, April 18-22, 1995).

EDRS Price - MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

Language: English

Document Type: EVALUATIVE REPORT (142); CONFERENCE PAPER (150)

Geographic Source: U.S.; California

Journal Announcement: RIEFEB96

The relevance of intelligence testing for schools within one district, the Sacramento (California) school district and the state of California is explored, and applications of intelligence theory in district schools and classrooms are discussed. Intelligence, for purposes of this discussion, is the aggregate capacity of each student's intelligence, the combination of abilities that are quantitatively different, and the way the student uses these abilities to deal with the environment. California allowed group and individual intelligence testing until the 1960s, but no longer allows group intelligence testing for students. Individual students are tested to identify the gifted or for other educational diagnoses. In the Sacramento City Unified School District intelligence tests are used for the same purposes, to identify the gifted and special education students. Self-efficacy theory and the theory of multiple intelligences are being applied in the intelligence assessment of students in the district. Much that is good is being recognized about intelligence, but many practices reflect the negative influences of believing that intelligence is fixed at an early age.

Descriptors: \*Educational Diagnosis; Educational Theories; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted; Identification; Intelligence; \*Intelligence Tests; Nature Nurture Controversy; School Districts; Self Efficacy; \*Special Education; Student Evaluation; Testing Problems; \*Test Use Identifiers: California; Relevance (Personal); \*Sacramento City Unified School District CA

EJ481459 EC608377

**Understanding What Is True and False about Intelligence and Ability Tests.**

Johnsen, Susan

Gifted Child Today (GCT), v17 n1 p22-23 Jan-Feb 1994

ISSN: 0892-9580

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); NON-CLASSROOM MATERIAL (055)

Journal Announcement: CIJAUG94

Target Audience: Parents

Parents of gifted children are urged to understand that there are many different kinds of intelligence and ability tests; tests are designed for different purposes; all tests involve a certain amount of error; and tests only sample one aspect of a child's performance.

Descriptors: Cognitive Tests; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted;  
\*Intelligence Tests; Testing Problems; \*Test Interpretation

EJ501402 EC611034

**Temporal Stability of Gifted Children's Intelligence.**

Spangler, Robert S.; Sabatino, David A.

Roeper Review, v17 n3 p207-10 Feb-Mar 1995

Theme Issue: The Psychology of the Gifted.

ISSN: 0278-3193

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143)

Journal Announcement: CIJAUG95

Target Audience: Researchers

The longitudinal stability of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised was examined for consistency in determining eligibility for gifted programs among 66 elementary children. All subtest scales except one remained extremely stable, producing less than one scale score point difference across three test administrations. Children originally found eligible for gifted programs maintained their eligibility status over six years.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Elementary Education; Eligibility; \*Gifted; Intelligence Quotient; \*Intelligence Tests; Longitudinal Studies; Student Placement; \*Test Reliability Identifiers: \*Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (Revised)

EJ479439 EC607999

**Testing for Giftedness: The Pros, Cons and Concerns.**

Shaughnessy, Michael F.; Fickling, Kris L.

Gifted Education International, v9 n2 p82-84 1993

ISSN: 0261-4294

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); REVIEW LITERATURE (070)

Journal Announcement: CIJJUL94

This paper reviews the advantages and disadvantages of testing for giftedness, the repercussions of testing and not testing, issues concerning intelligence quotients, and the effects of labeling children.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Elementary Secondary Education; Eligibility; \*Gifted; Intelligence Quotient; Intelligence Tests; Labeling (of Persons); \*Student Evaluation; Student Placement

ED344405 EC301134

**Conceptions of Intelligence and Giftedness.**

Bireley, Marlene

Mar 1992

8p.; In: Challenges in Gifted Education: Developing Potential and Investing in Knowledge for the 21st Century; see EC 301 131.

EDRS Price - MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

Language: English

Document Type: REVIEW LITERATURE (070)

Geographic Source: U.S.; Ohio

Journal Announcement: RIESEP92

This paper presents a review of the major ideas on the nature of intelligence and giftedness. Especially noted are theories of Howard Gardner, Robert Sternberg, and J.P. Das. Gardner expanded traditional notions of intelligence to include such talents as spatial ability, musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, and interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences. Sternberg identified seven metaphors for the mind and intelligence (geographic, computational, biological, epistemological, anthropological, sociological, and systems) and proposed a triarchic theory of intelligence consisting of three elements: metacomponents, performance components, and knowledge acquisition components. Subtheories specify the internal mental mechanisms that lead to intelligent behavior, the role of experience, and adaptation to the external world. The work of Das follows the ideas of the Russian psychologist, A.F. Luria. It sees the brain as involving an arousal system, a sensory reception and integration system, and a system for programming, regulation and verification of activity. A model of information integration replacing the conventional model of intelligence has been developed based upon planning, attention, simultaneous and successive processes. Also noted are ideas of Joseph Renzulli and others and the political implications of these ideas for gifted education in Ohio.

Descriptors: \*Cognitive Processes; Definitions; \*Educational Psychology; \*Gifted; \*Intelligence; Metacognition; Models; \*Talent; Theories Identifiers: Das (J P); Gardner (Howard); Luria (A R); Renzulli (Joseph); Sternberg (Robert)

EJ454460 EC604601

**The Case for the Stanford-Binet L-M as a Supplemental Test.**

Silverman, Linda Kreger; Kearney, Katheryn

Roeper Review, v15 n1 p34-37 Sep 1992

ISSN: 0278-3193

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); POSITION PAPER (120)

Journal Announcement: CIJAPR93

Target Audience: Researchers

The Stanford-Binet IV is compared to the original version and criticized for having less power to measure the high end of intelligence and for having norms that discriminate against gifted students. Strengths of the Stanford-Binet L-M are pointed out, and use of both scales for different purposes is recommended.

Descriptors: Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted; Intelligence Quotient; \*Intelligence Tests; Preschool Education; \*Standardized Tests; Test

Construction; \*Testing Problems; \*Test Validity Identifiers: Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale; \*Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale Fourth Edition

EJ454459 EC604600

**Stanford-Binet IV, of Course Time Marches On**

Robinson, Nancy M.

Roeper Review, v15 n1 p32-34 Sep 1992

ISSN: 0278-3193

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); POSITION PAPER (120)

Journal Announcement: CIJAPR93

Target Audience: Researchers

This paper presents a rationale for adopting the new form of the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales for use with gifted children, based on its more recent norms, its factorial structure, its less restrictive emphasis on g-factor intelligence and verbal reasoning, and its evenness in content from one age to another.

Descriptors: Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted; Intelligence Quotient; \*Intelligence Tests; Preschool Education; \*Standardized Tests; Test Construction; \*Test Validity Identifiers: \*Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale Fourth Edition

EJ454456 EC604597

**Parents vs. Theorists: Dealing with the Exceptionally Gifted.**

Tolan, Stephanie S.

Roeper Review, v15 n1 p14-18 Sep 1992

ISSN: 0278-3193

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); POSITION PAPER (120)

Journal Announcement: CIJAPR93

This paper explores the fundamental rift between parents raising exceptionally gifted children and theorists who dismiss this population as "statistically insignificant." The role of intelligence tests in identifying the highly unusual mind is examined. The paper concludes that exceptionally gifted children are suffering intellectual malnourishment.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted; \*Intelligence Tests; \*Intervention; \*Student Needs; Theories Identifiers: \*Extremely Gifted

ED334732 EC300467

**Instrument Use in the Identification of Gifted and Talented Children.**

Hunsaker, Scott L.; And Others

National Research Center on the Gifted Talented, Charlottesville, VA. 20 Jun 1991

63p.; Paper presented at the Meeting of the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Education Program Grant Recipients

(Washington, DC, June 20, 1991).

Sponsoring Agency: Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED),  
Washington, DC.

EDRS Price - MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.

Language: English

Document Type: CONFERENCE PAPER (150); RESEARCH REPORT (143)

Geographic Source: U.S.; Virginia

Journal Announcement: RIEDEC91

Information was solicited through mass mailings to school districts concerning their definitions of gifted and talented, the instruments they use to identify gifted and talented students, and the underserved populations they seek to serve. This report is based on information from 542 files, representing approximately 10% of the mass mailing. Results indicate the following: (1) the U.S. Office of Education definition of gifted is used by 73% of school districts, followed by use of an intelligence quotient definition by 15% and the Three-Ring definition by 11%; (2) there is still an over-reliance on the general intellectual aptitude construct; (3) a high number of districts measure general intellectual aptitude by means of academic achievement tests; and (4) in the measurement of creativity, there is a prevalence of an ideation construct and the use of intelligence and achievement tests. The paper concludes that the gap between what is considered appropriate practice for gifted identification and actual practice is still extensive. Some attention is being paid to the needs of a general racial/ethnic category, but little is being done with regard to specific populations--few districts consider the needs of limited English speakers, low socioeconomic status students, or students with handicapping conditions. The paper includes 4 references and 15 tables. Appendices provide a data coding guide and recording form.

Descriptors: Ability Identification; Achievement Tests; Aptitude Tests; Creativity; Definitions; Educational Diagnosis; Educational Practices; Elementary Secondary Education; Ethnic Groups; \*Evaluation Methods; \*Gifted; Gifted Disabled; Gifted Disadvantaged; Intelligence Tests; Limited English Speaking; National Surveys; Racial Factors; Student Evaluation; \*Talent; \*Talent Identification; Tests

EJ415046 EC231710

**Relationships between Scores of Gifted Students on Stanford-Binet IV and the SRA Educational Ability Series.**

Carvajal, Howard; McKnab, Paul

Gifted Child Quarterly, v34 n2 p80-82 Spr 1990

ISSN: 0016-9862

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); EVALUATIVE REPORT (142)

Journal Announcement: CIJFEB91

Target Audience: Researchers

Fifty gifted students, aged 9-17, were tested with the gifted identification battery from Stanford-Binet IV and the SRA Educational Ability Series (EAS).

The EAS was found to be a feasible test for screening gifted students. The discrepancies between the standard scores of the two tests were low and favored the EAS.

Descriptors: \*Ability Identification; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Gifted; \*Intelligence Tests; \*Screening Tests; \*Test Validity

Identifiers: \*SRA Tests of Educational Ability; \*Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale Fourth Edition

# Nature and Needs of the Gifted

## Gifted Endorsement Module

### TOPIC 10 – LABELING

**KEY QUESTION:** How do you find them?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of labeling gifted students.

**KEY CONCEPTS**

- labeling advantages
- labeling disadvantages

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Clark: *Growing Up Gifted* pp 351-358
- Gifted & talented: Exploring the positive and negative aspects of labeling (HO 1)
- An interview with Maria Sapon-Shevin: Implications for students and teachers of labeling students as learning disabled/gifted. (HO 2)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Facilitate group discussion of the two articles
- Using chart paper or white board, brainstorm a list of advantages and disadvantages of labeling gifted students.
- Facilitate a discussion with gifted students regarding the advantages and disadvantages of being labeled. Alternative: Role-play gifted students discussing the advantages and disadvantages of being labeled.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- active participation in group discussion of articles
- participation in the charting process for brainstormed list of advantages and disadvantages
- active participation in discussions and/or role-play activity

**RESOURCES:**

- “Gifted & talented: Exploring the positive and negative aspects of labeling.” *Roeper Review*. Bloomfield Hills: Dec 1998; Patrice Moulton; Michael Moulton; Mark Housewright; Keith Bailey
- “An interview with... Maria Sapon-Shevin: Implications for students and teachers of labeling students as learning disabled/gifted.” *Intervention in School and Clinic*: Austin; Mar 1999; Chris Walther-Thomas; Mary Brownell

### **Gifted & talented: Exploring the positive and negative aspects of labeling**

Moulton, P., Moulton, M., Housewright, M., & Bailey, K. (1998). *Gifted & talented: Exploring the positive and negative aspects of labeling*. Roeper Review; Bloomfield Hills.

The non-academic needs of gifted adolescence are too often ignored in the name of identification and programming concerns. Cross, Coleman and Stewart (1993) conducted a study suggesting that labeling which emerges informally among students, teachers, and administration within schools has pervasive and powerful effects in the lives of gifted students. This study reported that gifted students' self-concepts and personal adjustment were affected, or potentially affected, as a consequence of being labeled.

Kerr, Colangelo, and Gaeth (1988) examined the attitudes of gifted adolescents toward being gifted and how they perceived that others viewed their giftedness. A series of open ended questions were administered to the students and answers were classified as either social, personal, or academic. They found that the majority of the students felt that the most positive aspect of being gifted was either personal or academic. The personal aspect included such things as opportunity for personal growth, or a higher level of self-confidence. The academic aspect consisted of such things as opportunities for advanced classes and scholarships and getting higher grades. The social aspect related to interactions with peers was found to be ranked most negative by gifted students.

Manaster, Chan, Watt, and Wiehe (1994) conducted a partial replication of Kerr et. al.'s study and found that the majority of gifted and talented students felt that the best thing about being gifted was the social aspect. For example, they enjoyed receiving high regard, being listened to, and being respected. The majority of the students felt that the worst aspect of being labeled gifted was also social in nature. This included stereotypes and labels such as nerd or snob. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of adolescents regarding the effects of being labeled gifted.

#### Method

##### Participants

A survey was administered to 14 adolescents enrolled in an Introduction to Psychology course offered by the ADVANCE Program for gifted and talented students. The ADVANCE Summer Residential Program, located at the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts on the Northwestern State University Campus, was a multi-level educational sequence designed for academically gifted youth. The eligibility criteria for all courses were based primarily on the American College Testing Assessment (ACT), and the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores achieved during the year the student was in grade seven or in one of the region talent searches at Duke University, The John

Hopkins University, Northwestern University (Illinois), or the University of Denver. The ages of participants ranged from 13 to 15 years. Of the 14 students, 11 were female and three were male. The students represented various areas of Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Texas.

### Procedure

The survey was developed by the researchers based on a student response pool. This response pool was generated by having participants individually generate a list of 10 positive and 10 negative attributes to having the label of gifted and talented, specific to their academic experience. All items were accounted for and like items were combined. The final list contained 13 positive and 13 negative attributes.

From both the positive and negative listings, the students were asked to rank order the thirteen items in each list (1= least positive/negative, 13= most positive/negative). Group totals were tabulated for each item. Averages were then assessed for each item and the five highest averages for both lists were identified.

### Discussion

In accordance with past research (Kerr, Colangelo, Gaeth, 1988; Manaster, Chan, Watt, Wiche, 1994), the students in this study felt that attributes such as the positive sense of accomplishment, the feelings of being unique, and the ability to cover material in more detail were worthy of receiving high positive ratings.

In regard to the more negative aspects of being labeled gifted, there were also many commonalities within this study and recent literature (Kerr, Colangelo, Gaeth, 1988; Manaster, Chan, Watt, Wiche, 1994). The students in this study reported that having a label such as nerd, know-it-all, or teacher's pet (stereotypes), being taken advantage of by other students (peers using work / cheating), and the lack of guidance from the teacher in the classroom resulted in the most negative feelings toward their label of gifted. This study, however, found some subtle differences in how students perceive their label of gifted. Although not reported elsewhere in the literature, pressure and expectations from parents and teachers were ranked within the top five negative aspects.

<b>Top Five Attributes</b>	
Five (most) to one (least)	
(a) Positive perceptions:	
(9.90) - internal gratification	
(9.10) - identity / unique	
(8.79) - advanced learning in school	
(8.10) - interaction with other gifted students	
(7.78) - special experiences in gifted and talented classes.	
(a) Negative perceptions:	
(10.50) - pressure / expectations of parents	
(8.93) - stereotypes	
(8.14) - pressure / expectations of teachers	
(7.71) - peers using work / cheating	
(7.29) - not enough guidance (isolated learning).	

This finding suggests that parents and teachers must pay particular attention to the possible effects of the label gifted. This includes not only how the child interacts with peers but also how adults' feelings and expectations change because of this label. Teachers must be careful to monitor not only the change in peer relations but also how they may interact with students who are labeled gifted. Howard-Hamilton and Franks (1995) found that many counselors, teachers, and administrators virtually ignore the developmental needs of the gifted and only focus on their cognitive abilities.

It is the natural tendency to raise our expectations and to adapt our interactions with an adolescent labeled as gifted. However, "gifted" is not a homogeneous label and there is a broad range of potential and individual needs for gifted students. This study reminds us that while the label of gifted has many positive aspects, there are psychological, emotional, and social prices to pay for the label of gifted and talents. It is necessary to note that these children, while capable of functioning independently, seek attention, focus, and guidance, both socially and academically from the adults in their lives. Gifted adolescents, even those prepared to meet and/or exceed raised expectations need to feel as though support and affection are not contingent upon always meeting the mark.

While the findings of this survey are intriguing, a more comprehensive study is needed. Future research may wish to utilize a larger subject pool, provide an equally able nonlabeled comparison group, and balance the numbers of male and female subjects in order to draw comparisons.

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***An interview with...Mara Sapon-Shevin: Implications for students and teachers of labeling students as learning disabled/gifted***

Walther-Thomas, C., & Brownell, M. (March 1999). *An interview with...Mara Sapon-Shevin: Implications for students and teachers of labeling students as learning disabled/gifted*. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 34(2), 244.

Q: Please tell us about your educational background.

I don't think of myself as a special educator as much as I think of myself as a teacher educator. All of my higher education positions in teacher education have combined both special and general education. My first job was teaching in curriculum and instruction at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Next I moved to Cleveland State University and spent seven years directing a federally sponsored project designed to prepare classroom teachers for "mainstreaming" students with disabilities under the new P.L. 94-142. Following this, I accepted a joint appointment at the University of North Dakota in both curriculum and instruction and special education. For the past seven years I have been at Syracuse University in the Department of Teaching and Leadership. Syracuse has a program in inclusive teacher education that prepares teachers for heterogeneous, inclusive classrooms. All teachers come out of the program with dual certification in special education and elementary education and are prepared to teach in inclusive classrooms.

Q: How did you develop a professional interest in students with learning disabilities (LD) and gifts/talents (G/T)?

I've always been interested in students who didn't "fit in" to regular classrooms and typical instruction. Sometimes those students have been labeled as having learning disabilities. I am particularly concerned about how perceptions and labels keep us from meeting many students' needs within typical classrooms. I became interested in gifted education because it provides us with another good example of how public schools think about students' differences.

In schools we make many decisions based on the labels we give students. As a result of labels, students have different types of opportunities. Adults and peers respond to students in different ways based on these labels, and this influences how students are socialized and how they form their views of themselves. Labels in schools affect both the opportunities for children and their subsequent performance in class. There is really no solid evidence that shows that only gifted students benefit from the rich, creative, and experiential methods often used in gifted programs. All students benefit from these enriched learning opportunities. For example, when only gifted students are invited to attend a local production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, how much learning do other students miss? Educators, families, and administrators need to realize that most students, even nonreaders, can enjoy this play with its rich costumes, clever disguises, and lavish set designs. Just as many students can benefit from the "good teaching" strategies that LD teachers know, so can many more students benefit from the "gifted curriculum."

For me, gifted labels often present serious equity issues. In many cases, we create self-fulfilling prophecies for students by attaching gifted labels to some and not to others. Finally, the criteria for gifted identification is often based on somewhat arbitrary criteria that change from one community to another.

Q: How do labels affect students?

Suppose we visit a kindergarten class and find all of the students working at various centers individually or in small groups. A few minutes later the teacher calls for the students' attention. She asks them to put away materials and join her on the rug. All of the children respond to her request except for one girl. Repeatedly, the teacher asks this student, who is busily engaged in a building activity in the block corner, to put materials away. If this student has a special education label, we are more likely to conclude that this student is noncompliant or disobedient. The teacher may explain that she has requested a hearing test, plans to institute a new behavior modification program, or intends to conference with the child's family about her concerns. If, however, this child has a gifted label, the same behaviors are likely to evoke a very different reaction. The teacher may allow the behavior because it is exciting to see a student who is so deeply involved in her work that she is somewhat oblivious to the activity around her. We may all be impressed with this child's strong task-completion commitment.

Q: How do labels affect professionals' thinking about students?

The ways educators talk about students and think about them have a significant effect on how students are taught. Many professionals have difficulty talking about intraindividual differences that exist among students. We have a paucity of words and phrases for discussing learning differences unless we talk about these concepts in terms of discrepancies or deficiencies. Why can't we describe students (all students) as being "good at some things" and "having difficulty with others"? Why do we have to label a child or a youth who has strengths and weaknesses as "LD/gifted" in order to meet their unique learning needs?

Here is an activity I find useful to stimulate discussion among preservice and inservice teachers. Together we brainstorm all the differences that students bring to their classrooms. Most groups easily generate 40 or 50 different ways in which children differ: race, class, gender, ethnicity, family background, religion, language, physical size, skills, interests, etc. It is helpful to remind people that the presence of a disability represents only one dimension of who a student is.

Q: Demographically, who are students labeled as LD/G/T and what are the implications of this identification?

Let's look at who gets identified as LD and who gets identified as GT and then we'll combine these groups to determine who gets the dual label and what that means. Generally, schools identify students as LD if there is a discrepancy between their perceived ability (average or above average) and their performance (below average). Students are identified as gifted if they are perceived to have exceptionally high potential

(with or without accompanying high performance). So, a student is identified as LD/G/T if he/she is perceived to have very high potential but is not currently doing well. This can be contrasted to students who are performing poorly but aren't assessed to have high potential—we say those students are "underachievers" or have "mental retardation."

Since Caucasian students are far more likely to be identified as gifted than students of color as a result of biased assessment procedures and/or teacher perceptions, then students labeled as LD/G/T are most likely to be White.... These students often have parent advocates who have high expectations for them. These families are unlikely to accept the fact that their child is simply a "poor student" or "stupid"; they have the resources to push for outside testing, tutoring and other supplemental support. The essential questions are: "Who are the students for whom poor achievement or underachievement won't be tolerated? Who are the students for whom we will try "extra hard"?"

Q: What is the relationship between teaching provided for LD/G/T students and that provided for students identified as just LD or just GIT?

A dual diagnosis may enable school systems to provide more resources for identified students through special education and gifted education. It means that there may be greater support and opportunities for LD/G/T students and their families. While these students struggle, they also seem to have considerable potential and schools want to nurture these possibilities. As a result, schools may be willing to focus more resources on these students than they do on typical students without the LD or the gifted label.

Q: What are the effects of providing specialized training to teachers of students identified as LD/G/T on the preparation of general classroom teachers?

If we take certain skills that we know represent "good teaching" and bracket them off and offer them only to specialists, we are de-skilling general education teachers. When we do this, we are implicitly saying that they don't have to work with students with LD. Then we can't be surprised when they say they can't work with certain students. Good teaching is good teaching, regardless of who does it and where it takes place. While this doesn't mean that everybody has to be able to do everything when they graduate from a teaching program, they do need to have as many skills as possible and an attitude that embraces collaboration and inclusion. Teachers need to learn that students are not like bananas or tomatoes; there are not various "kinds" of kids. They are all individuals with common and unique needs. Teachers need preservice experiences that will help them become more respectful of students and more child-centered. They can demonstrate this through their roles as guides who strive to inspire a passion for learning among their students.

Ideally, all teachers should teach as though all of their students were gifted. Teachers of gifted students work hard to find creative ways to motivate, stimulate, and inspire their students. This philosophy should hold true for all students and all teachers. All teachers need to keep this in mind as they analyze curricula and give special attention to inclusiveness and content differentiation. They need to know how to adapt content to make it more accessible and to actively engage all learners. They need design skills so

they can create flexible instructional units that will provide differentiated levels of participation, learning, and involvement. For instance, in a 5th grade class studying the Civil War, there may be one or two students who are ready to read *Gone with the Wind*. While most students will not be ready for this book, all class members can read literature based on the Civil War and share their findings with others through oral reports, visual aids, and other creative projects. Students of all ability levels can benefit from learning experiences that facilitate their involvement and build on their individual talents and interests while still keeping them within a common classroom community.

Q: What can teachers do to improve the social climate and peer acceptance in heterogeneous classrooms?

The social climate needs to be a priority for teachers to improve the environment. Clearly, teachers need to understand issues related to inclusion and exclusion. Philosophically they need to be attentive to all kinds of differences and prepared to create positive environments for students. Valuing peer relationships and providing classroom support need to be fundamental aims of teachers. The more teachers respect children as individuals, the better they can address students' differences appropriately. To help teachers understand how important social climate is and develop the skills needed to create supportive classrooms, teacher educators must teach preservice teachers a philosophy of inclusion and skills to make that happen. They must provide fieldwork opportunities that will enable students to see supportive environments in action and develop expertise with support and feedback.

Four years ago, four teachers and I decided to do some research together on the development of a positive classroom climate. Together we read Vivian Paley's book, *You Can't Say, You Can't Play* and talked about it. These teachers then implemented classroom strategies for improving the social climate and monitored student progress. We met regularly and talked about the changes they were seeing. It is probably the best research I've ever done because it was research with teachers not on teachers. We were all learning and growing together and typical hierarchies between the university and the field were very blurred. In fact, the research was officially over a long time ago but this group is still meeting because it is meaningful for all of us.

Q: What do practitioners need most to teach all students effectively?

Traditionally, most teacher education programs have had separate tracks for special educators and general educators. Consequently, we shouldn't be surprised that many practicing general educators don't think they can-or should-work with students with disabilities. Today most public schools recognize the value of collaboration by special and general education teachers. As a result, many university programs are changing their practices. Teacher educators must model these new behaviors for students at the preservice level. Here at Syracuse, we have been co-teaching some courses for more than four years. Participating faculty members have learned some exciting new skills and have enjoyed the opportunities to work together. When I ask classroom teachers what they need most to accomplish this collaborative, inclusive teaching, the number one thing they tell me is more planning time with colleagues. They don't need outside experts to

come in and try to solve their classroom problems. Teachers can come up with their own solutions by brainstorming with colleagues. This kind of collaboration results in innovative and effective methods for helping all students be included in appropriate and engaging instruction. To prepare preservice teachers for classroom diversity, they need many opportunities to engage in problem-solving practice. They need to learn how to analyze and modify curricula in terms of attention to multicultural issues and inclusiveness. They also need to learn how to make curriculum and instruction more creative and lively. Teacher educators need to model these behaviors by providing all preservice students with the same kind of creative, challenging, and individualized experiences we want them to offer their students.

Q: Tell us about the teacher education program at Syracuse. All elementary education majors complete their bachelor's programs dually certified in general education and special education. None of our students can say that they don't want to teach certain types of students. This program emphasizes preparing teachers with the skills they need to differentiate and organize curricula so all students can learn. Throughout the program we also emphasize cooperative learning and cooperative teaching procedures. These structures facilitate both active participation and networks of classroom. We also place our students in schools where a wide range of students are being educated effectively. For example, they learn that Suzy, a girl with significant support needs, can be included in a regular third grade classroom if there is teacher collaboration, multi-level teaching and adequate teacher and student support. Working with capable teacher mentors enables student teachers to design units in which all class members, including those like Suzy, can participate actively and learn essential skills and content. In many ways, the teacher education program at Syracuse is the most exciting professional opportunity I've had. It makes me very hopeful that we can help teachers to embrace diversity in positive ways and to have the skill needed to turn a philosophy of inclusion into a concrete set of pedagogical and curriculum practices.

#### RECOMMENDED READING

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Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

**TOPIC 11 - IDENTIFICATION**

**KEY QUESTION:** How do you find them?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Discuss the relationship between gifted and programming and identification criteria.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- gifted and programming
- identification criteria

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Student Identification (HO 1)
- Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students (HO 2)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Compare standards identified in both readings to local or district programming and identification practices. Summarize comparisons using a T-chart or Venn diagram.
- Facilitate a group discussion on relationship of district's identification procedures to NAGC criterion and to Texas State Plan.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed summary of comparisons with T-chart or Venn diagrams.
- participation in group discussion

**RESOURCES:**

- "Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Student Identification" from NAGC site: <http://www.nagc.org/table7.htm>
- Review the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students ([http://www.swopnet.com/ed/TEA/Tx\\_State\\_Plan.html](http://www.swopnet.com/ed/TEA/Tx_State_Plan.html))

**National Association for Gifted Children**



**Gifted Education Programming Criterion:  
 Student Identification**

**Description: Gifted learners must be assessed to determine appropriate educational services.**

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
<p>1. A comprehensive and cohesive process for student nomination must be coordinated in order to determine eligibility for gifted education services.</p>	<p>1.0m Information regarding the characteristics of gifted students in areas served by the district must be annually disseminated to all appropriate staff members.</p> <p>1.1m All students must comprise the initial screening pool of potential recipients of gifted education services.</p> <p>1.2m Nominations for services must be accepted from any source (e.g., teachers, parents, community members, peers, etc.).</p> <p>1.3m Parents must be provided information regarding an understanding of giftedness and student characteristics.</p>	<p>1.0e The school district should provide information annually, in a variety of languages, regarding the process for nominating students for gifted education programming services.</p> <p>1.1e The nomination process should be ongoing and screening of any student should occur at anytime.</p> <p>1.2e Nomination procedures and forms should be available in a variety of languages.</p> <p>1.3e Parents should be provided with special workshops or seminars to get a full meaning of giftedness.</p>
<p>2. Instruments used for student assessment to determine eligibility for gifted education services must measure diverse abilities, talents, strengths, and needs in order to provide students an opportunity to demonstrate any strengths.</p>	<p>2.0m Assessment instruments must measure the capabilities of students with provisions for the language in which the student is most fluent, when available.</p> <p>2.1m Assessments must be culturally fair.</p> <p>2.2m The purpose(s) of student assessments must be consistently articulated across all grade levels.</p> <p>2.3m Student assessments must be sensitive to the current stage of talent development.</p>	<p>2.0e Assessments should be provided in a language in which the student is most fluent, if available.</p> <p>2.1e Assessment should be responsive to students' economic conditions, gender, developmental differences, handicapping conditions, and other factors that mitigate against fair assessment practices.</p> <p>2.2e Students identified in all designated areas of giftedness within a school district should be assessed consistently across grade levels.</p> <p>2.3e Student assessments should be sensitive to all stages of talent development.</p>
<p>3. A student assessment profile of individual strengths and needs must be developed to plan appropriate intervention.</p>	<p>3.0m An assessment profile must be developed for each child to evaluate eligibility for gifted education programming services.</p> <p>3.1m An assessment profile must reflect the unique learning characteristics and potential and performance levels.</p>	<p>3.0e Individual assessment plans should be developed for all gifted learners who need gifted education.</p> <p>3.1e An assessment profile should reflect the gifted learner's interests, learning style, and educational needs.</p>
<p>4. All student identification procedures</p>	<p>4.0m No single assessment instrument or its results must deny student eligibility</p>	<p>4.0e Student assessment data should come from multiple sources and include</p>

<p>and instruments must be based on current theory and research.</p>	<p>for gifted programming services.          4.1m All assessment instruments must provide evidence of reliability and validity for the intended purposes and target students.</p>	<p>multiple assessment methods.          4.1e Student assessment data should represent an appropriate balance of reliable and valid quantitative and qualitative measures.</p>
<p>5. Written procedures for student identification must include at the very least provisions for informed consent, student retention, student reassessment, student exiting, and appeals procedures.</p>	<p>5.0m District gifted programming guidelines must contain specific procedures for student assessment at least once during the elementary, middle, and secondary levels.          5.1m District guidelines must provide specific procedures for student retention and exiting, as well as guidelines for parent appeals.</p>	<p>5.0e Student placement data should be collected using an appropriate balance of quantitative and qualitative measures with adequate evidence of reliability and validity for the purposes of identification.          5.1e District guidelines and procedures should be reviewed and revised when necessary.</p>

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**TEXAS STATE PLAN FOR THE EDUCATION OF  
 GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENTS**

Retrieved from [http://www.swopnet.com/ed/TEA/Tx\\_State\\_Plan.html](http://www.swopnet.com/ed/TEA/Tx_State_Plan.html)

Instruments and procedures used to assess students for program services measure diverse abilities and intelligences and provide students an opportunity to demonstrate their talents and strengths.

SECTION 1	STUDENT ASSESSMENT	
Acceptable	Recognized	Exemplary
<p><b>1.1A</b>                      Written policies on student identification for gifted and talented programs are approved by the district board of trustees and disseminated to all parents. (19 TAC ¶89.1)</p>	<p><b>1.1.1R</b>                      Nomination procedures and forms for assessment of gifted/talented students are communicated to families in a language and form that the families understand or a translator or interpreter is provided.</p> <p><b>1.1.2R</b>                      Families and staff are informed of student placement and given opportunities to schedule conferences to discuss assessment data.</p>	<p><b>1.1E</b>                      The district and/or campus offers an awareness session prior to the nomination period for families to receive an overview of the assessment procedures and services for gifted/talented students.</p>
<p><b>1.2A</b>                      Written policies include provisions regarding furloughs, reassessment, exiting of students from program services, transfer students, and appeals of district decisions regarding program placement. (19 TAC ¶89.1(5))</p>	<p><b>1.2.1R</b>                      Policy related to student furloughs allow for students to have a leave of absence from gifted/talented program services for specified reasons and for a certain period of time without being exited.</p> <p><b>1.2.2R</b>                      Policy related to reassessment of gifted/talented students is based on performance in the program for gifted/talented students and if reassessment occurs at all, it is no more than once in elementary grades, once in middle grades, and once in high school.</p> <p><b>1.2.3R</b>                      Policy related to exiting of students from gifted/talented program services is based on multiple criteria including student performance in the program and are finalized by committee decision after consultation with parents and student regarding the most appropriate educational placement.</p> <p><b>1.2.4R</b>                      Policy related to transfer students ensures that students are properly assessed and</p>	<p><b>1.2E</b>                      Board policies on student assessment are reviewed at least once every three years and modified as needed.</p>

	<p>appropriately placed within six weeks of enrollment in the district. A policy is also included that addresses transfers from campus to campus within the district.</p> <p><b>1.2.5R</b>          When a gifted/talented student withdraws and transfers to another district, the sending district will include information on the student's assessment data.</p> <p><b>1.2.6R</b>          Policy related to appeals allow parents, students, and educators to appeal assessment decisions in a timely manner and to present new data, if appropriate.</p>	
<p><b>1.3A</b>          Students not yet identified are considered for nomination and screened once a year for services that are a part of the program for gifted students. (19 TAC §89.1(1))</p>	<p><b>1.3R</b>          Students not yet identified are nominated and screened at least once a year at the elementary grades and once a semester at the secondary level for services provided as part of the program for gifted students.</p>	<p><b>1.3E</b>          The nomination process for services provided as part of the gifted program is on-going, and screening of students occurs at any time the need arises.</p>
<p><b>1.4A</b>          Students in grades K-12 shall be assessed and, if identified, provided services. (TEC §29.122 and 19 TAC §89.1(3))</p>		<p><b>1.4E</b>          Students in grades 1 through 12 are assessed and served in all areas of giftedness included in TEC §29.121.</p>
<p><b>1.5.1A</b>          Assessment of students for gifted/talented programs includes measures collected from multiple sources for each area of giftedness served by the district. (19 TAC §89.1(2))</p> <p><b>1.5.2A</b>          Students are assessed in languages they understand or with non-verbal based tests.</p> <p><b>1.5.3A</b>          At the kindergarten level, as many criteria as possible, and at least three (3) are used to assess students who perform at remarkably high levels of accomplishment relative to age peers.</p> <p><b>1.5.4A</b>          Assessment in the areas of intellectual and specific academic fields, grades 1-12,</p>	<p><b>1.5.1R</b>          Based on a review of information gathered during the assessment process, the selection committee recommends placement for students whose data reflect that program placement is the most appropriate educational setting.</p> <p><b>1.5.2R</b>          All kindergarten students are automatically screened for advanced level services.</p>	

<p>uses a minimum of three (3) appropriate criteria that include both qualitative and quantitative measures.</p> <p><b>1.5.5A</b>          If services are available in leadership, artistic areas, and creativity, a minimum of three (3) criteria are used for assessment.</p>		
<p><b>1.6A</b>          Data and procedures assure that all populations of the district have access to assessment and, if identified, services offered as part of the program for gifted students. (19 TAC §89.1(3))</p>	<p><b>1.6R</b>          Gains have been made over the last two (2) years toward having the population of the gifted program reflect the population of the district.</p>	<p><b>1.6E</b>          The population of the gifted/talented program reflects the population of the total district or has for two of the past three years.</p>
<p><b>1.7A</b>          Final selection of students for services designed for gifted students is made by a committee of at least three (3) local district or campus educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students. (19 TAC §89.1(4))</p>	<p><b>1.7R</b>          The majority of members of the selection committee have completed thirty (30) hours of training as delineated in 19 TAC §89.2(1).</p>	<p><b>1.7E</b>          The majority of members of the selection committee have completed thirty (30) hours of gifted/talented training and are current with the six-hour update training as required in 19 TAC §89.2(2).</p>

Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

**TOPIC 12 – CONTRAST TO REGULAR**

**KEY QUESTION:** Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Describe how gifted services differ from general education services with regard to curriculum, instruction, assessment, conceptual orientation, grouping, and environment.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- Gifted Curriculum
- Gifted Instruction
- Gifted Assessment
- Gifted Conceptual Orientation
- Gifted Grouping
- Gifted Environment

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Clark: *Growing Up Gifted*: pp 446-491
- ERIC #E510 Differentiating\_Curriculum for Gifted Students (HO 1)
- ERIC #E538 Cluster Grouping of Gifted Students: How to Provide Full Time Services on a Part-time Budget (HO 2)
- ERIC #E536 Differentiating Instruction for Advanced Learners in the Mixed Ability Middle School Classrooms (HO 3)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Invite the district gifted coordinator to address participants on elements of differentiation.
- Facilitate “jigsaw” discussion for each of the major elements of differentiation: Acceleration, Complexity, Depth, Novelty, Intensity/idealism
- Invite “gifted adult” to discuss their school experiences.
- Observe and record an experienced teacher of the gifted using class created observation sheets.
- Review 13 Principles of Differentiation (Clark, p.449) and relate/ summarize rationale for these principles to the characteristics generally exhibited by gifted students.
- Facilitate “jigsaw” discussions on ERIC Digests.
- Host a panel discussion among participants on “Questions Often Asked” Clark pp 492-493.
- Update an existing unit or lesson incorporating elements of differentiation.

## Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

- *Inservice Plan.* Develop a program to present to other adults (parents, teachers, administrators, school board members, etc) that helps increase awareness of the unique needs of gifted students and their need for appropriate programming. Include a program outline, timeframe, related handouts/overheads, description of activities, and a resource list.

### **EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- Active participation in discussion with coordinator.
- Participation in “jigsaw” discussions
- Active participation in discussion with guest.
- Completed record of observation of teacher
- Completed summary of rationale.
- Active participation in panel discussions
- Completed unit or lesson.
- Completed program or presentation of Inservice Plan to include salient points and elements of program

### **RESOURCES:**

- Sunshine State Standards <http://www.firn.edu/doe/menu/sss.htm>
- [www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)
- ERIC Digest #E536 <http://ericec.org/digests/e536.html>
- “Ability Grouping: Geared for the Gifted” by Ellen Fledler, Richard E. Lange and Susan Winebrenner, *Roper Review*, January 1994
- ERIC Digest #E510 <http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed342175.html>
- ERIC Digest #E538 <http://ericec.org/digests/e538.html>
- “Shortchanging the Gifted,” Susan Winebrenner, *The School Administrator*, October 1999
- “Gifted Students Need an Education, Too,” Susan Winebrenner, *Educational Leadership*, September 2000

## **Differentiating Curriculum for Gifted Students**

Berger, S. L. (1991). *Differentiating Curriculum for Gifted Students*. ERIC Document ED34217. ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children Reston VA.

Students who are gifted and talented are found in full-time self-contained classrooms, magnet schools, pull-out programs, resource rooms, regular classrooms, and every combination of these settings. No matter where they obtain their education, they need an appropriately differentiated curriculum designed to address their individual characteristics, needs, abilities, and interests.

### **DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE CURRICULUM**

An effective curriculum for students who are gifted is essentially a basic curriculum that has been modified to meet their needs. The unique characteristics of the students must serve as the basis for decisions on how the curriculum should be modified (Feldhusen, Hansen, & Kennedy, 1989; Maker 1982; TAG, 1989; VanTassel-Baska et al., 1988).

It is difficult to generalize about students who are gifted because their characteristics and needs are so personal and unique. However, as a group they comprehend complex ideas quickly, learn more rapidly and in greater depth than their age peers, and may exhibit interests that differ from those of their peers. They need time for in-depth exploration, they manipulate ideas and draw generalizations about seemingly unconnected concepts, and they ask provocative questions.

A program that builds on these characteristics may be viewed as qualitatively (rather than quantitatively) different from the basic curriculum; it results from appropriate modification of content, process, environment, and product (Maker, 1982).

### **● MODIFYING CONTENT**

Content consists of ideas, concepts, descriptive information, and facts. Content, as well as learning experiences, can be modified through acceleration, compacting, variety, reorganization, flexible pacing, and the use of more advanced or complex concepts, abstractions, and materials. When possible, students should be encouraged to move through content areas at their own pace. If they master a particular unit, they need to be provided with more advanced learning activities, not more of the same activity. Their learning characteristics are best served by thematic, broad-based, and integrative content, rather than just single-subject areas. An entire content area arranged and structured around a conceptual framework can be mastered in much less time than is traditionally allotted (VanTassel-Baska, 1989). In addition, such concept-based instruction expands opportunities to generalize and to integrate and apply ideas. (See Bruner, 1966, *MAN: A COURSE OF STUDY [MACOS]* for an example of a thematic, integrated curriculum.)

Middle and secondary schools are generally organized to meet student needs within content areas. Providing an interdisciplinary approach is another way of modifying curriculum. Jacobs and Borland (1986) found that gifted students benefit greatly from curriculum experiences that cross or go beyond traditional content areas, particularly when they are encouraged to acquire an integrated understanding of knowledge and the structure of the disciplines.

### ● **MODIFYING PROCESS**

To modify process, activities must be restructured to be more intellectually demanding. For example, students need to be challenged by questions that require a higher level of response or by open-ended questions that stimulate inquiry, active exploration, and discovery. Although instructional strategies depend on the age of the students and the nature of the disciplines involved, the goal is always to encourage students to think about subjects in more abstract and complex ways. Activity selection should be based on student interests, and activities should be used in ways that encourage self-directed learning. Bloom's TAXONOMY OF EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES (1956) offers the most common approach to process modification. His classification system moves from more basic levels of thought, such as memory or recall, to more complex levels of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Parnes (1966), Taba (1962), and others have provided additional models for structuring thinking skills. Every teacher should know a variety of ways to stimulate and encourage higher level thinking skills. Group interaction and simulations, flexible pacing, and guided self-management are a few of the methods for managing class activities that support process modification.

### ● **MODIFYING ENVIRONMENT**

Gifted students learn best in a receptive, nonjudgmental, student-centered environment that encourages inquiry and independence, includes a wide variety of materials, provides some physical movement, is generally complex, and connects the school experience with the greater world. Although all students might appreciate such an environment, for students who are gifted it is essential that the teacher establish a climate that encourages them to question, exercise independence, and use their creativity in order to be all that they can be.

### ● **MODIFYING PRODUCT EXPECTATION AND STUDENT RESPONSE**

Teachers can encourage students to demonstrate what they have learned in a wide variety of forms that reflect both knowledge and the ability to manipulate ideas. For example, instead of giving a written or oral book report, students might prefer to design a game around the theme and characters of a book. Products can be consistent with each student's preferred learning style. They should address real problems, concerns, and audiences; synthesize rather than summarize information; and include a self-evaluation process.

## **ASSESSING CURRICULUM EFFECTIVENESS**

In their synthesis of curriculum effectiveness studies and effective practice, VanTassel-Baska et al. (1988) suggested that differentiated curriculum would respond to diverse characteristics of gifted learners in the following three ways:

- \* By accelerating the mastery of basic skills through testing-out procedures and reorganization of the curriculum according to higher level skills and concepts.
- \* By engaging students in active problem-finding and problem-solving activities and research.
- \* By providing students opportunities for making connections within and across systems of knowledge by focusing on issues, themes, and ideas.

Curriculum development is a dynamic, ongoing process. Special attention needs to be paid to articulation, scope, and sequence to avoid gaps and repetition through grade levels; ensure that the understandings and skills we expect children to develop fit together; and assure that children are provided with the knowledge and skills that will prepare them for the future. Periodic evaluations of curriculum effectiveness allow corrections to be made when needed, and they are essential if curriculum is to meet the long-term needs of gifted students for increasingly complex and challenging opportunities.

## CONCLUSION

The curriculum committee of the Leadership Training Institute (Passow, 1982) developed seven guiding principles for curriculum differentiation that reflect the considerations described in this Digest.

- 1. The content of curricula for gifted students should focus on and be organized to include more elaborate, complex, and in-depth study of major ideas, problems, and themes that integrate knowledge within and across systems of thought.
- 2. Curricula for gifted students should allow for the development and application of productive thinking skills to enable students to reconceptualize existing knowledge and/or generate new knowledge.
- 3. Curricula for gifted students should enable them to explore constantly changing knowledge and information and develop the attitude that knowledge is worth pursuing in an open world.
- 4. Curricula for gifted students should encourage exposure to, selection, and use of appropriate and specialized resources.
- 5. Curricula for gifted students should promote self-initiated and self-directed learning and growth.

- 6. Curricula for gifted students should provide for the development of self-understanding and the understanding of one's relationship to persons, societal institutions, nature, and culture.
- 7. Evaluations of curricula for gifted students should be conducted in accordance with the previously stated principles, stressing higher level thinking skills, creativity, and excellence in performance and products.

Developing curriculum that is sufficiently rigorous, challenging, and coherent for students who are gifted is a challenging task. The result, however, is well worth the effort. Appropriately differentiated curriculum produces well-educated, knowledgeable students who have had to work very hard, have mastered a substantial body of knowledge, and can think clearly and critically about that knowledge. Achieving such results for one or for a classroom full of students who are gifted will produce high levels of satisfaction, not only for the students who are beneficiaries, but also for every teacher who is willing to undertake the task.

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## **Cluster Grouping of Gifted Students: How To Provide Full-Time Services on a Part-Time Budget**

Winebrenner, S., & Devlin, B. (1996). *Cluster Grouping of Gifted Students: How To Provide Full-Time Services on a Part-Time Budget*. Reston VA.:ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED397618)

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PLACE GIFTED STUDENTS IN CLUSTER GROUPS?**

A group of five to eight identified gifted students, usually those in the top 5% of ability in the grade level population, are "clustered" in the classroom of one teacher who has training in how to teach exceptionally capable students. The other students in that class are of mixed ability. If there are more than eight to ten gifted students, two or more clusters should be formed.

### **ISN'T CLUSTER GROUPING THE SAME AS TRACKING?**

No. In a tracking system, all students are grouped by ability for much of the school day, and students tend to remain in the same track throughout their school experience. Gifted students benefit from learning together, and need to be placed with similar students in their areas of strength (Hoover, et al., 1993; Kulik & Kulik, 1990; Rogers, 1993). Cluster grouping of gifted students allows them to learn together, while avoiding permanent grouping arrangements for students of other ability levels.

### **WHY SHOULD GIFTED STUDENTS BE PLACED IN A CLUSTER GROUP INSTEAD OF BEING ASSIGNED EVENLY TO ALL CLASSES?**

When teachers try to meet the diverse learning needs of all students, it becomes extremely difficult to provide adequately for everyone. Often, the highest ability students are expected to "make it on their own." When a teacher has several gifted students, taking the time to make appropriate provisions for them seems more realistic. Furthermore, gifted students can better understand and accept their learning differences if there are others just like them in the class. Finally, scheduling out-of-class activities is easier when the resource teacher has only one cluster teacher's schedule to work with.

### **WHAT ARE THE LEARNING NEEDS OF GIFTED STUDENTS?**

Since these students have previously mastered many of the concepts they are expected to "learn" in a given class, a huge part of their school time may be

wasted. They need exactly what all other students need: consistent opportunity to learn new material and to develop the behaviors that allow them to cope with the challenge and struggle of new learning. It is very difficult for such students to have those needs met in heterogeneous classes.

### **ISN'T GIFTED EDUCATION ELITIST?**

Gifted students need consistent opportunities to learn at their challenge level-- just as all students do. It is inequitable to prevent gifted students from being challenged by trying to apply one level of difficulty for all students in mixed-ability classes. When teachers can provide opportunities for all students, including those who are gifted, to be challenged by rigorous curriculum, there is nothing elitist about the situation.

### **DON'T WE NEED GIFTED STUDENTS IN ALL CLASSES SO THEY CAN HELP OTHERS LEARN THROUGH COOPERATIVE LEARNING, PEER TUTORING, AND OTHER COLLABORATIVE MODELS?**

When gifted students are placed in mixed-ability groups for cooperative learning, they frequently become tutors. Other students in these groups may rely on the gifted to do most of the work and may actually learn less than when the gifted students are not in their groups. When gifted students work in their own cooperative learning groups from time to time on appropriately challenging tasks, they are more likely to develop positive attitudes about cooperative learning. At the same time, other students learn to become more active learners because they are not able to rely so heavily on the gifted students. When the learning task focuses on content some students already know, those students should be learning how to cooperate in their own groups on extension tasks that are difficult enough to require cooperation. When the cooperative task is open-ended and requires critical or divergent thinking, it is acceptable to include the gifted students in heterogeneous cooperative learning groups.

### **IF GIFTED STUDENTS ARE NOT PLACED IN SOME CLASSES, WON'T THOSE CLASSES LACK POSITIVE ROLE MODELS FOR ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL LEADERSHIP?**

Research on role modeling (Schunk, 1987) indicates that to be effective, role models cannot be drastically discrepant in ability from those who would be motivated by them. Teachers overwhelmingly report that new leadership "rises to the top" in the non-cluster classes. There are many students, other than identified gifted students, who welcome opportunities to become the new leaders in groups that no longer include the top 5% of a grade level group. This issue becomes a

problem only when more than 5 to 10% of students are clustered. As classes are formed, be sure the classes without clusters of gifted students include several highly capable students.

**HOW DOES THE CLUSTER GROUPING CONCEPT FIT IN WITH THE  
INCLUSION MODELS THAT INTEGRATE STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONAL  
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS INTO REGULAR CLASSES?**

The Inclusion model, in which students with exceptional learning needs are integrated into regular classrooms, is compatible with the concept of cluster grouping of gifted students, since both groups have exceptional educational needs. The practice of cluster grouping allows educators to come much closer to providing better educational services for groups of students with similar exceptional learning needs. In non-cluster classrooms, teachers report they are able to pay more attention to the special learning needs of those for whom learning may be more difficult. Some schools choose to avoid placing students with significant learning difficulties in the same class that has the cluster group of gifted students. A particular class may have a cluster of gifted students and a cluster of special education students as long as more than one adult is sharing the teaching responsibilities.

**WON'T THE PRESENCE OF THE CLUSTERED GIFTED STUDENTS INHIBIT  
THE PERFORMANCE OF THE OTHER STUDENTS IN THAT CLASS, HAVING  
A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON THEIR ACHIEVEMENT?**

When the cluster group is kept to a manageable size, many cluster teachers report that there is general improvement in achievement for the entire class. This suggests the exciting possibility that when teachers learn how to provide what gifted students need, they also learn to offer modified versions of the same opportunities to the entire class, thus raising the level of learning for all students, including those who are gifted. The positive effects of the cluster grouping practice may be shared with all students over several years by rotating the cluster teacher assignment among teachers who have had gifted education training and by rotating the other students so all students eventually have a chance to be in the same class with a cluster group.

**HOW SHOULD STUDENTS BE IDENTIFIED FOR THE CLUSTER GROUP?**

If there will be one cluster, its highly capable students should be those who have demonstrated that they will need curriculum that exceeds grade level parameters. Traditional measures, such as standardized tests may also be used, but not as the sole criteria. If there will be more than one cluster, those highly

capable in specific subjects might be grouped together in separate clusters. Profoundly gifted students should always be grouped together, since there will rarely be more than two such students in any grade level. Identification should be conducted each spring with the help of someone with training in gifted education.

### **WHAT SPECIFIC SKILLS ARE NEEDED BY CLUSTER TEACHERS?**

Since gifted students are as far removed from the "norm" as are students with significant learning difficulties, it is necessary for teachers to have special training in how to teach children of exceptionally high ability. Cluster teachers should know how to:

- \* recognize and nurture behaviors usually demonstrated by gifted students;
- \* create conditions in which all students will be stretched to learn;
- \* allow students to demonstrate and get credit for previous mastery of concepts;
- \* provide opportunities for faster pacing of new material;
- \* incorporate students' passionate interests into their independent studies;
- \* facilitate sophisticated research investigations;
- \* provide flexible grouping opportunities for the entire class.

### **SHOULD THE CLUSTER GROUPING MODEL REPLACE OUT-OF-CLASS ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED STUDENTS?**

No. Cluster grouping provides an effective complement to any gifted education program. Gifted students need time to be together when they can just "be themselves." The resource teacher might also provide assistance to all classroom teachers in their attempts to differentiate the curriculum for students who need it. As a matter of fact, this resource person is being called a "Schoolwide Enrichment Specialist" in many schools instead of a "Gifted Program Coordinator" in recognition of the fact that so many students can benefit from "enriching" learning opportunities.

### **IS CLUSTERING FEASIBLE ONLY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS?**

No. Cluster grouping may be used at all grade levels and in all subject areas. Gifted students may be clustered in one section of any heterogeneous class, especially when there are not enough students to form an advanced section for a particular subject. Cluster grouping is also a welcome option in rural settings, or wherever small numbers of gifted students make appropriate accommodations

difficult. Keep in mind, however, if your school has enough gifted students for separate sections in which curriculum is accelerated, such sections should be maintained. Many middle schools have quietly returned to the practice of offering such sections. Placement in cluster groups is gained by demonstrating that one needs a differentiated curriculum--not by proving one is "gifted."

### **HOW ARE RECORDS KEPT OF THE PROGRESS MADE BY STUDENTS IN CLUSTER GROUPS?**

Differentiated Educational Plans (DEP) should be maintained for gifted students and filed with their other ongoing records. In some schools, teachers develop a DEP for the cluster group, rather than for individual students. These plans briefly describe the modifications that are planned for the group and should be shared with parents regularly.

### **WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF CLUSTER GROUPING?**

Gifted students feel more comfortable when there are other students just like them in the class. They are more likely to choose more challenging tasks when other students will also be eligible. Teachers no longer have to deal with the strain of trying to meet the needs of just one precocious student in a class. The school is able to provide a full-time, cost-effective program for gifted students, since their learning needs are being met every day.

### **WHAT ARE THE DISADVANTAGES OF CLUSTER GROUPING?**

There may be pressure from parents to have their children placed in a cluster classroom, even if they are not in the actual cluster group. Gifted students may move into the district during the school year and not be able to be placed in the cluster classroom. These situations may be handled by:

- \* providing training for all staff in compacting and differentiation so parents can expect those opportunities in all classes;
- \* requiring parents to provide written documentation of their child's need for curriculum differentiation instead of requesting the placement by phone;
- \* rotating the cluster teacher assignment every two years among teachers who have had appropriate training so parents understand that many teachers are capable of teaching gifted students;
- \* rotating other students into cluster classrooms over several years.

Another disadvantage might arise if the cluster teachers are not expected to consistently compact and differentiate the curriculum. Their supervisor must

expect them to maintain the integrity of the program, and must provide the needed support by facilitating regular meetings of cluster teachers, and by providing time for the enrichment specialist to assist the cluster teachers.

### **CONCLUSION**

There is an alarming trend in many places to eliminate gifted education programs in the mistaken belief that all students are best served in heterogeneous learning environments. Educators have been bombarded with research that makes it appear that there is no benefit to ability grouping for any students. The work of Allan (1991), Feldhusen (1989), Fiedler (1993), Kulik and Kulik (1990), Rogers (1993) and others clearly documents the benefits of keeping gifted students together in their areas of greatest strength for at least part of the school day. It appears that average and below average students have much to gain from heterogeneous grouping, but we must not sacrifice gifted students' needs in our attempts to find the best grouping practices for all students.

If we do not allow cluster groups to be formed, gifted students may find their achievement and learning motivation waning in a relatively short period of time. Parents of gifted students may choose to enroll their children in alternative programs, such as home schooling or charter schools. The practice of cluster grouping represents a mindful way to make sure gifted students continue to receive a quality education at the same time as schools work to improve learning opportunities for all students.

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Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

**TOPIC 13 – DELIVERY MODELS**

**KEY QUESTION:** Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Describe different types of service delivery models for gifted programs.
- Discuss the relationship of the level of need to placement in a continuum of services

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- Delivery Models for Gifted Programs
- Level of Need
- Placement
- Continuum of Services

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Clark: *Growing Up Gifted*: pp 252-299
- “Basic Educational Options for Gifted Students in Schools”  
[http://cfge.wm.edu/Articles/Basic Education Options.htm](http://cfge.wm.edu/Articles/Basic_Education_Options.htm) (HO 1)
- ERIC Digest #E513 Challenging Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom (HO 2)
- ERIC Digest #464 Meeting the Needs of Able Learners Through Flexible Pacing (HO 3)
- NAGC Programming Criterion: Program Design (HO 4)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Conduct a Socratic Seminar on strengths and weaknesses of service delivery models. Create a T-chart of results.
- Create an “Advocate Fair” based on the pyramid on Clark p.256. Assign a “box” to participants, providing each a one-minute opportunity to advocate for their service delivery model.
- Role-play a discussion between a basic education classroom teacher and a teacher of the gifted related to rationale each see for placing gifted students in their classroom. Brainstorm a list of questions or topics to be discussed.
- Create a chart displaying the continuum of services appropriate for gifted students.
- Brainstorm a list of strengths and weaknesses inherent in each of the service delivery models.
- Program visit. Arrange to visit a program that serves gifted students, for example, an International Baccalaureate Program, a visual and performing arts magnet school, or a class for underachieving gifted students. Log your observations and reactions and use this recorded

## Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

log to develop a PowerPoint presentation that describes your visit and relates to this class and course readings.

### **EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- Active participation in a Socratic Seminar as well as participation in the creation of T-charts.
- Participation in the “one-minute opportunity” exercise, advocating particular service delivery models.
- Active participation in the Role-play.
- Completed chart displaying the continuum of services appropriate for gifted students.
- Completed list of strengths and weaknesses inherent in each of the service delivery models.
- Completed log of observations and reactions together with completed Power Point presentation that describes the visit and relates to this class and course readings.

### **RESOURCES:**

- “From Gifted Education to Programming for the Talent Development”,
- Treffinger, Phi Delta Kappan, Bloomington, Volume; 79. Issue: 10, June 1998
- “Is gifted education still viable?” [www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org)
- “The WOGI Project: Types of Delivery Models” Compendium 2000-2001: Continuum of Services
- National Research Center for the Gifted and Talented: Research Should Inform Practice  
<http://www.msd.k12.or.us/tagweb/giftedstandards.htm>
- ERIC Digest #E513  
[http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/ed352774.html](http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed352774.html)
- ERIC Digest #E464  
[http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/ed314916.html](http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed314916.html)
- NAGC Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Program Design  
<http://www.nagc.org/table3.htm>

## **Basic Educational Options for Gifted Students in Schools**

VanTassel-Baska, J. Retrieved from <http://cfge.wm.edu/documents/AnnotatedBibliography.htm>

There is a wide variety of ways that educators can assist in the talent development process of advanced learners. Yet every school needs to have basic provisions in place to assure the educational development of these students in the domains of learning for which the school has responsibility. Most school mission statements proclaim the intention of educating every child to the level of his or her potential, yet many times those words have no translation value for the gifted as they sit bored in classrooms where their instructional level exceeds by years their age-peers sitting in the next seat. Thus there is a real need to consider nonnegotiable options for this population regardless of age or grade considerations as well as general program organizational approaches employed to effect sound service delivery.

### **Acceleration**

One of the most important curriculum policy initiatives that school districts might enact on behalf of all students would be one that addresses acceleration. Acceleration assumes that different students of the same age are at different levels of learning within and across learning areas, thus necessitating diagnosis of learning level and prescription of curriculum at a level slightly above it. The government document Prisoners of Time (National Education Commission on Time and Learning, 1994) documented the importance of recognizing time as the crucial variable in learning, an understanding that Bloom had several decades ago: "If experience, research, and common sense teach nothing else, they confirm the truism that people learn at different rates in different ways with different subjects." Understanding that students have differences in learning rates for different subject areas in different kinds of material at different stages of development is crucial to school patterns of curriculum and instruction. Flexibility in schooling, however, has been one of the most difficult tasks for public schools to enact in responding to students with special needs.

Various components need to be considered in developing such a policy at the school district level. One such component should allow for early entrance and early exit procedures for students at various stages of development. Many gifted children are academically ready for school before they are at the "magic age" and others develop more rapidly than age peers, once they are in a schooling environment. Access to high school early eliminates the holding pattern of the middle school years so common in many contexts around the country. Early college entrance can be accomplished by those already academically proficient in high school subject matter. One of the advantages of the new standards movement is a clear way to document mastery levels in each area of schooling, thus allowing students ready to move forward to do so.

Another indication of curriculum flexibility involves the offering of content-based acceleration practices at all levels of schooling and in all subject areas. In the last 20 years, schools have become more open to ideas of math acceleration but not to other subject area advancement. For gifted learners with precocious abilities in verbal, scientific, and artistic areas, such pathways are crucial to enhanced learning and development at their natural rate of progression in school. Not only is there a limit on subject areas to be considered for accelerative practices, there also is often a perception that rate should be capped at six months or a year so as not to allow students to get too out of step with the school curriculum or other students their age. Both of these practices are faulty, based on 80 years of research showing the positive outcomes of such accelerative opportunities on enhanced learning, motivation, and extracurricular engagement of accelerated learners.

Acceptable forms of acceleration in operation at the high school level include the hallmark secondary programs of the College Board Advanced Placement Program (AP) and the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program. Both of these programs offer students the opportunity to engage in college-level work while still in high school and reward their diligence with college placement and/or credit for work done during the high school years. Such a model needs to be available to students at all stages of development, such that evidence of advanced work brings credit toward the next level of the educational experience.

For secondary schools, dual enrollment courses at local community and 4-year colleges would also be important. Many highly able students may wish to sample college early although not actually attend fulltime. Dual enrollment offers a wonderful opportunity for this early academic and socialization process to occur. Students may take 1-2 classes away from campus or sometimes arrangements are made for the dual enrollment course to be delivered on-site. Currently, 22 states have dual enrollment policies, encouraging local districts to take advantage of the opportunity for students to gain access to higher education while still in high school. These courses are then banked for college and will automatically be credited for a student attending a public college in the same state. Often, the equivalent of freshman year in college may be credited. For students and schools in rural areas of a state, dual enrollment provides a strong alternative to AP and IB, often not possible to mount in small schools due to lack of interested faculty or sufficient numbers of ready students.

Another approach to acceleration for students advanced in all areas of the curriculum is simple grade level acceleration. Such acceleration can be handled through early entrance policies but needs to be broadened to consider stages of schooling beyond the naturally occurring transition years. For students showing more than two years advancement in all school subjects, grade level acceleration may be a good decision. Obviously, each case should be considered individually but more concern is voiced about this well-documented and researched practice than is warranted. Grade acceleration at critical points of schooling can do much to counter boredom and disenchantment with school among our best learners.

A final avenue for acceleration should be in the realm of telecommunications. Advanced courses can now be provided technologically in ways not possible a decade ago. School policy needs to reflect these new alternatives to teaching and learning, especially for advanced students who can profit greatly from them. Several universities offer on-line courses, many tailored to younger students such as the Stanford Education Program for Gifted Youth (EPGY) computer-based program in mathematics. Other universities such as Ball State beam advanced courses to rural Indiana schools through their telecommunications link. Independent study opportunities with university faculty and research project work conducted globally can now be a part of student learning beyond the classroom.

### *Grouping*

Given the current research on the positive use of ability grouping with the gifted (Kulik & Kulik, 1992; Rogers, 1998), it is critical that school districts attend to this facet of a support structure in evolving programs. The range of alternatives extends from within-class flexible grouping and differentiated assignments to opportunities for special classes or schools and independent grouping options such as mentorships and internships.

The use of within class grouping is critical at all levels of schooling. At the elementary level, many classrooms now are heterogeneous and inclusive. Such settings typically provide little differentiation or challenge for the gifted learner and may not be as beneficial for any group as within-class grouping approaches. At the secondary levels, the norm for honors and even advanced placement grouping is across high ability and gifted ranges. Consequently, the pace of the class and the opportunity for more in-depth work may be lost to gifted students as the teacher struggles to cover all of the material with everyone. In-class grouping according to student capacity provides teachers alternative ways to handle certain aspects of learning. For example, differentiating paper assignments by group allows advanced students both more latitude and depth potential for their work. Differentiating readings by group may have the same effect. More in-class writing practice may be given to groups already skilled at peer critique. All of these approaches to vary "within group" work will help the teacher ensure that each student receives appropriate levels of instruction.

Special class grouping of gifted learners by subject area has historically been the most utilized approach to grouping at the secondary level while pull-out by program focus has predominated at the elementary level. Special class grouping is one of the primary ways to deliver differentiated curriculum. Without such grouping arrangements, it is much more difficult to do so. Research has shown that 84% of time in heterogeneous classroom settings is spent on whole class activities, with no attention to differentiating for the gifted (Archambault, Westberg, K. L., Brown, Hallmark, Zhang, & Emmons, 1993). Moreover, special classes are the context within which good acceleration practices for individual students can be applied, as the level of the class by necessity needs to be more advanced in content. Many schools have provided special grouping for mathematics and language arts, but

not science and social studies. Again, it is critical that a grouping policy apply to all relevant academic subjects, where size of school can allow for such clustering to be formed. Students advanced in all areas need the opportunity to interact with others at their ability levels and to advance academically at a rate and pace consonant with their abilities. Such a situation can typically only occur in a specialized group setting.

Grouping for more independent types of work is also a critical part of a grouping policy at all levels. Students may select among options geared at providing them more personalized opportunities for intellectual growth, whether through a well-designed independent project or through work in a professional setting or through an "optimal match" with an adult in an area of expertise in which the student is interested. Each of these types of arrangements calls for schools to adopt a policy that allows for one-on-one interactions with the community at large as well as more individualized use of school time.

#### *Differentiated curriculum*

Differentiation for the gifted recognizes the interrelated importance of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in defining the term. A differentiated curriculum is one that is tailored to the needs of groups of gifted learners and/or individual students and provides experiences sufficiently different from the norm to justify specialized intervention, delivered by a trained educator of the gifted using appropriate instructional and assessment processes to optimize learning.

Curriculum design is one major component of a differentiated curriculum for the gifted since it delineates key features that constitute any worthwhile curriculum. A well-constructed curriculum for the gifted has to identify appropriate goals and outcomes. What is important for these students to know and be able to do at what stages of development? How do planned learning experiences focus on meaningful experiences that provide depth and complexity at a pace that honors the gifted learner's rate of advancement through material? The curriculum for the gifted must also be exemplary for the subject matter under study, meaning that it should be standards-based and thus current in the thinking of real world professionals who practice writing, mathematical problem-solving or do science for a living. Moreover, it should be designed to honor high ability student needs for advanced challenge, in-depth thinking and doing, and abstract conceptualization.

The new standards require more attention to helping educators develop advanced tasks that address the standards, organize the standards across grade levels to ensure an emphasis on higher level skills and concepts, and provide opportunities for depth of exploration of concepts across sets of standards. Of less help is creating whole new courses or units that are outside the intent of the standards.

Curriculum differentiation must also address the need for careful selection of materials for use in classrooms serving gifted and high ability learners. These materials should go beyond a single text as resource, provide advanced readings,

present interesting and challenging ideas, treat knowledge as tentative and open-ended, and provide a conceptual depth that allows students to make interdisciplinary connections. Hopefully, each classroom would also have high quality technology resources that would meet the same criteria.

Instructional approaches that foster differentiated responses among diverse learners include those that are inquiry-based, open-ended, and employ flexible grouping practices. An example of an effective inquiry-based model would be problem-based learning (PBL) that has the learner encounter a real world problem sculpted by the teacher out of key learnings to be acquired in a given subject, proceed to inquire about the nature of the problem as well as effective avenues to research about it, and sources for acquiring relevant data. The instructional techniques needed by the teacher include high level questioning skills, listening skills, conferencing skills, and tutorial abilities in order to guide the process to successful learning closure in a classroom. PBL also requires the use of flexible team grouping and whole class discussion. Problem resolution requires student-initiated projects and presentations, guided by the teacher. Thus effective instruction must include the selection of a few core teaching models that successfully highlight the intended outcomes of the curriculum. Administrators must ensure that teachers have the opportunity to learn such models deeply and well.

Just as differentiation involves careful selection of core materials and curriculum that underlies them and the deliberate choice of high powered instructional approaches, it also requires the choice of differentiated assessment protocols that reflect the high level learning attained. High stakes assessments such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), Advanced Placement exams, and even state assessments are the standardized symbols of how well students are doing in comparison to others of their age. Secondary schools, in order to be considered high quality, must be producing students scoring at the top levels on these nationally normed instruments. Yet deep preparation for success on these tests rests in individual classrooms. Even strong learners like the gifted cannot do as well as they could without adequate preparation in relevant content-based curriculum archetypes. Thus the use of these assessments as planning tools for direct instruction in each relevant subject area is a key to overall improvement in student performance. Administrators responsible for the review of teacher lesson plans need to know how such assessment models are being converted into work in classrooms. Departments need to spend planning time on strategies for incorporating such elements. Since such assessments are a reality and viewed by our society as crucial indicators of student progress in school, we need to make them work for us rather than against us in the public arena.

In addition to standardized measures being employed to assess student learning, it is also crucial that more performance-based tools be employed to assess individual growth and development. In tandem with more standardized measures, they provide a more complete picture of individual progress toward specific

education goals. For gifted learners, in particular, the quality of performance on such measures may be a better indicator of skills and concepts deeply mastered than paper and pencil measures.

A final consideration in the use of alternative assessment approaches with gifted learners involves attention to teaching students the rubrics for assessment at the time the assignment is given so that students can understand expectation levels required for any given assignment at conception rather than at the end. This approach also ensures that criteria for judgment are both well-defined by the teacher and well-understood by the student.

### *Quality teachers*

Core knowledge and skills for teachers who work with the gifted might be a long list indeed, but focusing it on non-negotiables may make it more manageable. What are the critical requirements for identifying high quality teachers of the gifted? First of all, teachers of the gifted need to be lifelong learners themselves, open to new experiences and able to appreciate the value of new learning and how it applies to the classroom. Secondly, they need to be passionate about at least one area of knowledge that they know well and be able to communicate that passion and its underlying expertise to students. This would imply deep knowledge in a subject area coupled with the ability to use the skills associated with that knowledge domain at a high level. Thirdly, they need to be good thinkers, able to manipulate ideas at analysis, synthesis, and evaluation levels with their students within and across areas of knowledge. Such facility would imply that they themselves were strong students in college and scored well on tests of reasoning like the Scholastic Aptitude Test and the Graduate Record Exam. Fourth, teachers of the gifted must be capable of processing information in a simultaneity mode, meaning that they need to be able to address multiple objectives at the same time, recognize how students might manipulate different higher level skills in the same task demand, and easily align lower level tasks within those that require higher level skills and concepts.

Teacher-directed differentiation for the gifted has no meaning if teachers cannot perform these types of tasks and evidence these skills.

In order to develop and demonstrate these skills, teachers of the gifted need a master's degree and two years of teaching in regular classrooms. Furthermore, sustained coherent inservice programs are important in maintaining and expanding teacher expertise.

### *Access to advanced opportunities external to schools*

While local schools play a critical role in educating students, they can be even more effective when coupled with outside community resources that supplement learning. One such program model is the Saturday and/or Summer Enrichment programs offered by local universities. These programs tend to be enrichment oriented and allow area gifted students to use their leisure time pursuing topics of academic interest such as poetry, computers, chemistry, and architecture under

the direction of a highly qualified instructor. Because these programs usually charge tuition, it is often necessary for schools to disseminate information to parents in order to make them aware of such services. Also offered by universities are the Talent Search programs, usually targeted to academically able middle school students who qualify based on SAT scores. Often offered during the summer, including a residential component, many of these programs provide accelerated content equivalent to high school course-work.

Other activities which involve the community include mentorships and internships. The former involves selecting an individual who can serve as a role model to a student, and establishing a one-on-one relationship. This connection helps a student understand how an adult mentor experiences and processes the world, with the relationship built on some area of mutual interest. Internships and/or job shadowing opportunities involve placements in community settings, usually for a period from two weeks to a full term, depending on the situation. The purpose is to help the student explore the real world and to see the work habits and task demands that accompany certain professions. Both of these alternatives are highly relevant for gifted students, particularly for the extremely gifted child or adolescent who may feel "very different" from the norm and may have time available to explore different work environments or career options as a result of program or content acceleration.

### **Conclusion**

All of these nonnegotiable options are crucial to the development of talent but rarely can be done by the schools alone. An active partnership with families is required to ensure that students receive the right opportunities at the right time in the right degree of intensity. There are no magic rules to assist in this process as it is highly individuated and dependent on the domain of talent, the level of student aptitude and interest, and the developmental stage of the talent itself. Consequently, it is crucial that educators are sensitive to the parental perspective as each of these options is activated. Public and private education are a necessary but not sufficient catalyst for talent to thrive.

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### **Challenging Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom**

Parke, B. N. (1992). Challenging gifted students in the regular classroom. (Report No. ERIC Digest #E513). Reston, VA: ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED352774)

How do teachers develop an instructional plan that will be challenging, enlightening, and intriguing to students of different abilities, and still maintain a sense of community within the classroom? This is the central question for educators as they begin the quest of bringing sound instruction to gifted students in regular classroom settings.

Research tells us that a large majority of gifted and talented students spend most of their day in regular classroom settings (Cox, Daniel, & Boston, 1985). Unfortunately, instruction in the regular classroom setting is generally not tailored to meet their unique needs (Archambault et al., 1993; Cox, Daniel, & Boston, 1985; Westberg, Archambault, Dobyons, & Salvin, 1993). This situation is putting gifted students at risk of failing to achieve their potential. Achievement scores below what might be expected from our brightest population provide the evidence (Callahan, 1990; Kantrowitz & Wingert, 1992; Ness & Latessa, 1979).

The challenge for educators is twofold. Our gifted and talented population must have a full service education if we expect these students to thrive in the manner in which they are capable. Second, these students must be involved in educational experiences that are challenging and appropriate to their needs and achievement levels. The place to begin is in the regular classroom.

#### **WHAT ARE THE STEPS TO FULL SERVICE?**

The goal for program planners dealing with the challenges of meeting instructional needs of gifted and talented students in regular classroom settings is to create a learning environment in which these students can fully develop their abilities and interests without losing their sense of membership as part of the class. This is a tall order for teachers and students, because the usual remedy is to segregate these students into small homogeneous groups or to assign individual projects. While both of these strategies have their place, neither is sufficient to accomplish the goal. Therefore, we must look beyond the conventional, consider the overall dynamics of the classroom, and plan for a working environment in which all the students can fully develop their abilities and interests within the confines of one organizational unit.

#### **WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS WHO ARE GIFTED AND TALENTED?**

When asked this question, most teachers will respond by citing three observations. First, gifted youngsters tend to get their work done quickly and may seek further assignments

or direction. Second, they ask probing questions that tend to differ from their classmates in depth of understanding and frequency. Finally, they have interests in areas that are unusual or more like the interests of older students. In fact, these observations define the characteristics that challenge regular classroom teachers the most as they attempt to bring full instructional service to gifted and talented students. These students potentially differ from their classmates on three key dimensions (Maker, 1982): (1) the pace at which they learn; (2) the depth of their understanding; and (3) the interests that they hold. In order to develop instructional programs that will meet the needs of gifted students in regular classroom settings, it is necessary to address and accommodate these defining characteristics.

### **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE REGULAR CLASSROOM TEACHER?**

Most teachers have, on occasion, had students in their classes who know more than they do about some specific topics they are teaching. Teachers who see themselves as facilitators of learning can find a great deal to offer these students. As a facilitator, orchestrator, designer, or coach, the teacher presents the conditions for learning. He or she helps the student develop the skills necessary to learn, understand, and interpret an appropriately differentiated curriculum. This role requires teachers to have skills in both their subject areas (understanding its content, the manner in which its professionals think) and in the management of learning.

### **WHAT PROGRAM OPTIONS ARE NEEDED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THESE STUDENTS?**

One of the greatest mistakes made by school districts attempting to deliver programming to their gifted and talented students is that they look for unidimensional approaches. The heterogeneity of the gifted population leaves only one remedy that has any chance of succeeding over the long haul. That is a multiple programming approach (Cox, Daniel, & Boston, 1985; Parke, 1989)--one in which a constellation of programs is available in which students can participate based on their abilities, needs, and interests. Some of these options may be specifically tailored to high ability students (such as Advanced Placement, honors, or resource room programs). Others may be found in the course listings for general education that are available to all students but which serve gifted and talented students well (such as student council, school newspaper, Future Problem Solving, computer club, etc.). Profiles of students' abilities, derived from comprehensive assessment batteries, can be used to match students to appropriate programs.

### **WHAT INSTRUCTIONAL PROVISIONS MUST BE MADE?**

Designing instructional opportunities for gifted students in regular classrooms finds its inspiration at the source of the concern--the students. The characteristics of these students lead to the instructional accommodations that are appropriate (The Association for Gifted, 1989). The accelerated pace at which gifted and talented students learn information requires that flexible pacing strategies (Daniel & Cox, 1988) such as skill grouping, curricular compacting, contracting, and credit by examination be integrated into

classroom management formats. The need to explore topics in depth leads program planners to include provisions such as original research, independent studies or investigations, mentorships, or classes at another school or institution of higher learning. When addressing the unique or advanced interests of these students, planners might be inspired to include opportunities such as minicourses, interest groups, clubs, science or art fairs, or internships. The teachers' challenge is to identify student needs, develop and gain access to appropriate programs and curricula that correspond to those needs, and monitor student progress throughout the course of study. The students' challenge is to make the best possible use of the resources available while becoming fully responsible for their own learning.

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### **Meeting the Needs of Able Learners through Flexible Pacing**

Daniel, N. & Cox, J. (1989). Meeting the Needs of Able Learners through Flexible Pacing (ERIC Digest #464). Reston, VA: ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children. ED314916 Retrieved from <http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9213/needs.htm>

This digest is based on information presented in Flexible Pacing for Able Learners (1988) by Neil Daniel and June Cox. This CEC-ERIC book includes descriptions and anecdotal information from 32 successful programs in 18 states. Highlights and case studies provide a composite picture of how flexible pacing is managed and how it works.

#### **WHAT IS FLEXIBLE PACING?**

Flexible pacing includes any program in which students are taught material that is appropriately challenging for their ability and allows them to move forward in the curriculum as they master content and skills. For able or gifted learners, flexible pacing generally means some form of acceleration, accomplished by moving the student up to advanced content or by moving advanced content down to the student. The rate of progress can be varied in either direction. With flexible pacing all students can progress through school at a pace that provides a steady challenge without crippling frustration or unreasonable pressure.

#### **METHODS TO ACHIEVE FLEXIBLE PACING**

In practice, flexible pacing can be achieved by a variety of methods:

Continuous progress. Students receive appropriate instruction daily and move ahead as they master content and skills. The purest form of flexible pacing, continuous progress breaks the age-in-grade lockstep.

Compacted course. Two or more courses, usually scheduled for a semester each, are compacted into an abbreviated time.

Advanced level course. Students are enrolled in courses normally taught at a higher grade level.

Grade skipping. Students move ahead 1 or more years, skipping levels in the normal sequence of promotion.

Early entrance. Students enter elementary school, middle school, high school, or college earlier than the age usually prescribed.

Concurrent or dual enrollment. Students at any grade level take classes in two school levels. For example, elementary school students take some classes at junior high; junior high students take some high school classes; high school students enroll for some courses at a college or university.

Credit by examination. Students enter an advanced-level course or receive credit upon satisfactory completion of a comprehensive examination or upon certification of mastery. The best known examples are the College Board's advanced placement and college-level examination programs.

#### **HOW CAN SCHOOLS OR DISTRICTS BEGIN TO IMPLEMENT A FLEXIBLE PACING PROGRAM?**

Flexible pacing will not occur systematically or to any significant extent unless the school or district has a policy that strongly encourages the practice and provides the necessary inservice support and planning time for teachers. It is often best to introduce the program gradually, with a carefully targeted student population. Some districts have selected a single subject area, often mathematics, as a starting place. Other school districts have successfully introduced continuous progress programs for students of all abilities at selected school sites. This approach works best when the principal and teachers choose to work in that setting.

Flexible pacing entails not only flexible instruction but also flexible management systems. Today, in many schools, computerized storage of records and schedules makes flexible pacing options easier to use, whereas the recordkeeping alone would have been overwhelming just a few years ago. Attention to individual needs for every student or selected groups of students can be developed piece by piece. Planners should start wherever appropriate: with a single subject, a single set of students, or a single school.

#### TEACHER CHANGES NEEDED TO PROMOTE FLEXIBLE PACING

Allowing students to move through the school curriculum at their own pace requires a special commitment from every teacher. First, the teacher must agree that the best way to serve students is to allow them to progress in key subject areas as they master content and skills. The teacher must recognize that as a consequence students will be placed for instruction with other students at the same achievement level, not necessarily with those of the same age.

A shift to flexible pacing normally requires training or retraining in teaching methods and classroom management that support some form of continuous progress. Inservice instruction may include conferences and workshops on methods of grouping, team teaching, curriculum sequencing, and a variety of topics specific to the subject of pacing. Teachers may also need training in more advanced or broader content within specialty areas. At the secondary level, summer institutes that prepare teachers for the College Board's advanced placement courses or the International Baccalaureate are well established. These cooperative programs contribute by helping teachers address the needs of advanced high school students undertaking college-level coursework on their high school campuses.

#### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF FLEXIBLE PACING?

The educational benefit of flexible pacing is individualization of instruction and learning to a higher degree than is possible when students all move in lockstep. Students have found curriculum more challenging and less repetitious. Arranging school-wide scheduling in blocks (e.g., mathematics from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m., reading and language from 10:00 to 11:00) permits an easy flow in which all students are studying the same subject at the same time but at different levels. Once grade labels are removed from achievement levels and disassociated from chronological age, students of all abilities appear to thrive.

The desired outcome of sound teaching and learning, whatever the pace, is mastery of concepts and skills. In a school with continuous progress, students can move ahead naturally as they are ready. They are not forced to choose between remaining in grade level, where they may be bored, or skipping ahead, where they may miss learning critical skills or information.

### HOW ARE PEOPLE REACTING TO FLEXIBLE PACING PROGRAMS?

Typically, teachers, administrators, and parents of children in schools with flexible pacing are excited by the progress of their children. Although flexible pacing is too new to have established a strong database in research, most schools using it have found that it allows highly able learners to move ahead rapidly in all aspects of learning and skill development.

One survey of students in the Las Cruces Public Schools (Daniel & Cox, 1988) showed that students welcomed the opportunity for early entry into a more complex curriculum. They viewed their years in accelerated classes as productive and challenging. All of the 37 students in the program said that if they had the choice to make over again, they would still choose the accelerated curriculum. For each of them, the advantages far outweighed any disadvantages.

Flexible Pacing for Able Learners is available from The Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091.

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Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Gifted Children. Jerusalem, Israel:  
Kollek & Son.

Van Tassel-Baska, J. (1986). Acceleration. In C. J. Maker (Ed.), *Critical issues in gifted education: Defensible programs for the gifted* (pp. 179-196). Rockville, MD: Aspen.

The major agency concerned with flexible pacing for able or gifted learners is: Gifted Students Institute, P.O. Box 11388, Ft. Worth, TX 76110-0388.

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Descriptors: Academically Gifted, Acceleration (Education), Continuous Progress Plan, Curriculum Design, Elementary Secondary Education, Flexible Progression, Individualized Instruction, Pacing, Program Development, Student Needs, Teaching Methods

Identifiers: ERIC Digests

<b>Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Program Design</b>		
<b>Description: The development of appropriate gifted education programming requires comprehensive services based on sound philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support.</b>		
Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. Rather than any single gifted program, a continuum of programming services must exist for gifted learners.	1.0m Gifted programming services must be accessible to all gifted learners.	1.0e Levels of services should be matched to the needs of gifted learners through the provision of a full continuum of options.
2. Gifted education must be adequately funded.	2.0M Gifted education funding should be equitable compared to the funding of other local programming.	2.0e Gifted education programming must receive funding consistent with the program goals and sufficient to adequately meet them.
3. Gifted education programming must evolve from a comprehensive and sound base.	3.0m Gifted education programming must be submitted for outside review on a regular basis.  3.1m Gifted programming must be guided by a clearly articulated philosophy statement and accompanying goals and objectives.  3.2m A continuum of services must be provided across grades pre-K–12.	3.0e Gifted education programming should be planned as a result of consultation with informed experts.  3.1e The school or school district should have a mission/philosophy statement that addresses the need for gifted education programming.  3.2e A comprehensive pre-K–12 program plan should include policies and procedures for identification, curriculum and instruction, service delivery, teacher preparation, formative and summative evaluation, support services, and parent involvement.
4. Gifted education programming services must be an integral part of the general education school day.	4.0m Gifted education programming should be articulated with the general education program.  4.1m Appropriate educational opportunities must be provided in the regular classroom, resource classroom, separate, or optional voluntary environments.	4.0e Gifted services must be designed to supplement and build on the basic academic skills and knowledge learned in regular classrooms at all grade levels to ensure continuity as students progress through the program.  4.1e Local school districts should offer multiple service delivery options as no single service should stand alone.

5. Flexible groupings of students must be developed in order to facilitate differentiated instruction and curriculum.	5.0m The use of flexible grouping of gifted learners must be an integral part of gifted education programming.	5.0e Gifted learners should be included in flexible grouping arrangements in all content areas and grade levels that ensures that gifted students learn with and from intellectual peers.
6. Policies specific to adapting and adding to the nature and operations of the general education program are necessary for gifted education.	6.0m Existing and future school policies must include provisions for the needs of gifted learners.	6.0e Gifted education policies should exist for at least the following areas: early entrance, grade skipping, ability grouping, and dual enrollment.

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**TOPIC 14 – STATE AND LOCAL PROVISIONS**

**KEY QUESTION:** Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Describe how gifted education is organized at the state and local levels.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- state gifted education organization
- local gifted education organization

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- State Resources for Gifted Education  
<http://ericec.org/fact/stateres.html> (HO 1)
- Karnes: State Definitions for the Gifted and Talented Revisited (see Topic 7 HO 4)
  - note: two accompanying tables ( table 1 and table 2)
- School District's Special Programs and Procedures for Exceptional Students (SP&P) Document

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Conduct a search of current online resources for organizational models and summarize findings.
- Contact local gifted coordinator or lead teacher, asking for a mini-presentation or conference call related to gifted programming within district.
- Poll teachers enrolled in class to verify their exposure to the various delivery models in place within district. Chart results.
- Create a matrix or graphic organizer outlining the various gifted delivery models currently utilized within the school district.
- Peruse through the web sites of neighboring school districts to identify service delivery models in place. Chart results.
- *Analysis of data.* Examine the relevant data for gifted students either throughout the State of Florida, by county, or throughout one county by school. Discuss (think, pair, share) findings and provide an explanation for the variances you observe.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- Active participation in group discussions and completed summaries
- Completed chart
- Completed matrix or graphic organizers
- Completed chart of delivery models
- Active participation in Think Pair Share and discussion of findings.

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**RESOURCES:**

- Florida Department of Education BSCS Website,  
<http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/ese-home.htm>
- “State Definitions for the Gifted and Talented Revisited”, by Kristen R. Stephens and Frances A. Karnes, Exceptional Children, 66, 219-238

**State Department of Education – Gifted Education Contacts**

To obtain the current information on state gifted contacts, click on the following link:

<http://www.nagc.org/state/statedeptcontacts.pdf>

**TABLE 1**  
*Areas of Giftedness Addressed in State Definitions*

Areas	AL	AK	AZ	AR	CA	CO	CT	DE	FL	GA	HI	ID	IL	IN	IA	KS	KY	LA	ME	MD	MA	MI	MN	MS	MO
Superior Intellect	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Specific Academic				♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Creative Artistic Abilities	♦			♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Leadership				♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Visual and Performing Arts				♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Vocational																									
Practical Arts																									
Psychomotor																									
Task Commitment Motivation																									
Advanced Learning Ability				♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Demonstrated Achievement High Performance	♦			♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Critical Thinking																									
Exceptional Production																									
Advanced Potential				♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦

**TABLE 1**  
*(Continued)*

Areas	MT	NE	NV	NH	NJ	NM	NY	NC	ND	OH	OK	OR	PA	RI	SC	SD	TN	TX	UT	VA	VT	WA	WV	WI	WY	
Superior Intellect	♦				♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Specific Academic	♦	♦			♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Creative Artistic Abilities	♦				♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Leadership										♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Visual and Performing Arts							♦			♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Vocational																										
Practical Arts																										♦
Psychomotor																										
Task Commitment Motivation																										
Advanced Learning Ability																										
Demonstrated Achievement High Performance	♦						♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Critical Thinking																										♦
Exceptional Production																										♦
Advanced Potential	♦						♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦

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**TOPIC 15 – CULTURAL AND SOCIOECONOMIC DIFFERENCES**

**KEY QUESTION:** Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Discuss the implications of cultural and socioeconomic differences on programming.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- cultural difference
- socioeconomic differences
- programming

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Clark: *Growing Up Gifted* pp 496-534
- ERIC Digest #E480 Meeting the Needs of Gifted and Talented Minority Language Students (HO 1)
- “*NATIONAL EXCELLENCE: A CASE FOR DEVELOPING AMERICA’S TALENT*” Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Part 2, (The kind of support available for educating gifted and talented students) (The kind of education most gifted and talented students receive in elementary and secondary schools) and (Effective programs for gifted and talented students and the qualities these programs possess that might benefit all American students.) <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part2.html> (see appendix)
- “*NATIONAL EXCELLENCE: A CASE FOR DEVELOPING AMERICA’S TALENT*” Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Part 3, (The Future of Education for the Nation's Most Talented Students). <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part3.html> (see appendix)

**LEARNING OPTIONS – ACTIVITIES**

- Research and discussion of program activities within your district.
- Develop a graphic organizer to present the results of your research.
- Facilitate a “jigsaw” discussion opportunity to cover the major topics included in the Clark reading.
- Use the “Questions Often Asked” section (Clark, pp 535-536) as the basis of a panel discussion.
- Create three groups and ask that each choose a particular ethnic, cultural, or socio-economic minority discussed in the readings for this session. List culturally supported attitudes or abilities that children from this group might bring to the learning setting which would be facilitating and/or limiting. Discuss what impact these would have on

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the gifted programming and how these differences could be used to enhance learning. Consider using graphic representation of findings.

- Design a survey for educators, parents, and students to address issues related to gifted programming. Review what research says about the issues referenced in your survey; conduct your survey; report the results; and compare your findings to current literature. Your survey should include at least twenty potential respondents and a minimum of **five** questions.

### **EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- participation in discussions
- completed graphic organizer of results
- active participation in jigsaw discussion
- active participation in panel discussion
- completed lists of attitudes or abilities as well as participation in discussions
- completed survey and review of issues.

### **RESOURCES:**

- “Appropriate Differentiated Services, Guides for Best Practices in the Education of Gifted Children”, Coleman & Gallagher, *Gifted Child Today*, September/October 1995
- “Atypical Gifted” Understanding the Diversity of the Gifted, Bertie Kingore and Lynlee Rinard, TEMPO, Spring 1997, newsletter of the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented
- ERIC Digest #E520 (see Topic 6)  
[http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/ed358676.html](http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed358676.html)
- ERIC Digest #E480  
[http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/ed321485.html](http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed321485.html)
- “NATIONAL EXCELLENCE: A CASE FOR DEVELOPING AMERICA’S TALENT” Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education,
  - Part 2, <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part2.html>
  - Part 3, <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/part3.html>

## **Meeting the Needs of Gifted and Talented Minority Language Students**

Cohen, L. M. (1990). *Meeting the needs of gifted and talented minority language students* (ERIC Digest E480). Reston, VA: ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 321485.

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Students with special gifts and talents come from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Gifted students can be described as possessing an abundance of certain abilities that are most highly valued within a particular society or culture. Many minority language children have special talents that are valued within their own cultures; unfortunately, these students are often not recognized as gifted and talented.

Most procedures for identifying gifted and talented students have been developed for use with middle class children who are native English speakers. Such procedures have led to an underrepresentation of minority language students in gifted and talented programs, which in turn prevents our schools from developing the strengths and abilities of this special population.

This digest explores the controversy surrounding the underrepresentation of minority language students in gifted and talented programs and makes recommendations for more suitable assessment techniques and program models.

### **Why Are Minority Language Students Underrepresented in Programs for Gifted and Talented Students?**

Educators who work closely with minority language students argue that using standardized IQ tests as a primary measure of giftedness does not fairly accommodate the linguistic and cultural differences of these students. These educators look to identify the "able learner" rather than the more narrowly defined gifted student who scores in the top 3% on IQ tests. Able learners are defined by some educators as students in the top 10% of their class who have shown some extraordinary achievement in one or more areas such as science, mathematics, or the performing arts (Ernest Bernal, personal communication, September 13, 1988).

Reliance on IQ tests alone has greatly diminished the potential number of gifted students. Renzulli (1978) indicated that "more creative persons come from below the 95th percentile than above it,

and if such cut-off scores are needed to determine entrance into special programs, we may be guilty of actually discriminating against persons who have the highest potential for high levels of accomplishment" (p. 182).

Three percent is a conservative estimate of the percentage of the population that is considered gifted. However, in Arizona, for example, only 0.14% of the students in gifted and talented programs come from language minority backgrounds (Maker, 1987). Using the 3% criterion, one would estimate that 2,900 limited-English-proficient (LEP) students in Arizona could be receiving some type of services for giftedness. An assessment of needs, however, revealed that only 143 LEP children were participating in gifted programs, despite the fact that minority language students represent 16.17% (96,674) of the school-age population. Other studies indicate that the proportion of Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians identified as gifted represents only half that expected (Chan & Kitano, 1986).

Table 1 illustrates that, nationwide, Caucasians and Asians are overrepresented, while the percentage of Blacks and Hispanics is only half what would be expected in gifted and talented programs.

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**Table 1**  
**Percentage of Minority Students Enrolled**  
**in Regular Educational Programs and Special Programs**

<u>Minority Group</u>	<u>General Enrollment</u>	<u>Enrollment in Gifted Programs</u>
Caucasians	71.2%	81.4%
Blacks	16.2%	8.4%
Hispanics	9.1%	4.7%
Asians	2.5%	5.0%

Sources: Zappia (1989); Machado (1987).

The concept of giftedness as it relates to culture and values can help explain why more gifted and talented Asian and Pacific-American students have been identified than any other group. Although these children comprise only 2.2% of the school-age population, they constitute 4.4% of the identified gifted students, twice the expected number (Kitano, 1986). (This figure is slightly lower than the statistic given in Table 1 [2.5%], but the table has more recent data.) The traditional Asian values of educational attainment and obedience to authority support achievement in U.S. schools, despite the fact that

Asian and Pacific-American cultures differ in many ways from the majority culture.

Different learning styles may also contribute to the underrepresentation of gifted and talented minority language students. Native Americans are often caught between the schools' value of independence and the home and community value of interdependence. In school, students generally sit in rows and face the teacher, whereas in Native American culture, everyone would be seated in a circle and decisions would be made collectively.

Among many Hispanics, cultural differences may also produce manifestations of giftedness that differ from the traditional manifestations in the majority culture. In Puerto Rico, for example, children learn to seek the advice of their family rather than act independently (Perrone & Aleman, 1983). Respect for elders is often valued more than precociousness, which can be seen as disrespectful. Similarly, the Mexican-American child who respects elders, the law, and authority becomes vulnerable in a school system that values individual competition, initiative, and self-direction.

### **What Are Some Commonly Used Techniques for the Identification of Gifted and Talented Minority Language Students?**

Research on the identification of giftedness points to the lack of appropriate assessment procedures. Giftedness is not a trait inherent to native English speakers; however, there is a lack of instruments that can detect giftedness in minority language students (Gallagher, 1979; Llanes, 1980; Raupp, 1988; Renzulli, Reis, & Smith, 1981). Most tests rely on either oral or written language skills. Minority language students who are not considered gifted may, in fact, be very gifted, but unable to express themselves in English. Therefore, many researchers urge that great caution be exercised in using English standardized tests for the identification of linguistic and cultural minority students. These researchers also recommend selecting tests that reduce cultural and linguistic bias.

The identification and assessment of gifted and talented minority-language students is complex because it involves students who are both gifted and talented and from a language or cultural background different from that of middle class, native-English-speaking children. Many researchers and practitioners recommend multiple assessment measures to give students several opportunities to demonstrate their skills and performance potential.

Each school can establish its own relevant criteria to ensure that the screening process is appropriate for a specific target population. Moreover, an assessment team that is sensitive to their needs can represent the population to be served in the program. In addition, teachers can be brought into the identification process, because they have the opportunity to observe students in numerous academic and social situations.

An alternative to using English language standardized tests is the assessment of LEP students in their native language. These tests measure a variety of skills: creative thinking skills such as fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration; intellectual development based on Piaget's theory of development (Piaget, 1954; Piaget & Inhelder, 1973); language proficiency; and nonverbal perceptual skills of cognitive development.

Many school districts now include behavioral checklists or inventories, nominations, or related techniques to identify gifted and talented minority language students. Checklists usually compare or rate the student according to general descriptions or more specific examples of behavior deduced from characteristics of gifted persons. Many of these instruments are designed locally, are available from state departments of education, or are available commercially.

Other commonly used methods such as interviews, self-reports, autobiographies, and case histories can also be used to identify gifted and talented minority language students. Interviews are often scheduled as part of the identification or selection process to determine a candidate's general fitness for a program and provide information for instructional planning. The use of case studies to identify giftedness has been documented by Renzulli and Smith (1977) and is recommended because it relies on multiple sources of information about a student's performance. Although these procedures can be cumbersome, time consuming, and complex, they can provide the most valid basis for decision making.

### **What Types of Programs Are Available for Gifted and Talented Students, and Are They Suitable for Minority Language Students Who Are Selected to Participate?**

There are as many different types of programs and instructional models for gifted and talented LEP students as there are different views of intelligence. The program models discussed in this digest demonstrate a wide range of suggestions for choosing a program for gifted and talented students and can stimulate ideas about the types of program that can be implemented. However, each district must

implement the program that will best meet the needs of its gifted and talented minority language students. Jean M. Blanning, of the Connecticut Clearinghouse for Gifted and Talented (1980), suggests that, in general, programs for gifted and talented minority language students should allow their students to:

- Pursue topics in depth at a pace commensurate with their abilities and intensity of interest
- Explore, branch out on tangents unforeseen when first beginning a study, without curriculum parameters confining them to a particular direction
- Initiate activities, diverge from the structured format, within a framework of guidance and resources appropriate for such exploration
- ask questions about areas or aspects of studies and find answers which lead to more questions
- Experience emotional involvement with a project because it is based on interests and use of higher levels of ability
- Learn the skills, methodology, and discipline involved in intellectual pursuits and/or creative endeavors
- Think (interpretations, connections, extrapolations) and imagine (ideas, images, intuitive insights) to develop fully into their own product
- Experience the use of intellectual abilities and senses necessary in all creative endeavors.

### **Enrichment Programs**

The most common program model for gifted and talented students is probably an enrichment program, in which students receive instruction in addition to their regular classroom instruction. Enrichment programs provide learning experiences designed to extend, supplement, or deepen understandings within specific content areas (Dannenberg, 1984). Some enrichment programs provide academic services and cultural opportunities for gifted and talented students.

Gifted and talented LEP students at Louis S. Brandeis High School in New York City (Cochran & Cotayo, 1983) attend operas and museums and, in this way, become a part of American culture. Students have said that the program has made them feel "special," because they visit places they ordinarily would not. Another example of activities in an enrichment program would be to have students studying the prehistoric era watch films on dinosaurs, draw pictures of them, and go to a natural history museum to see a dinosaur exhibit.

The decision as to whether or not to implement an enrichment program may be greatly affected by the school district's concept of giftedness. If giftedness is considered a quality to be measured through IQ tests, then perhaps an enrichment program would be seen as a "frill," because it does not concentrate strictly on academics. On the other hand, this program may be particularly appreciated by gifted and talented minority language students, since they often do not receive this sort of exposure to the arts in a standard instructional program.

### **Resource Rooms**

Another program model uses a resource room, which is usually staffed by a resource teacher. Students may visit the resource room to do special assignments or to check out various educational games or puzzles. In a kindergarten/first grade gifted and talented program in Albuquerque, New Mexico (Beam, 1980), parents are also able to check out items for their children. The resource room provides an excellent opportunity for parents and students to bridge the gap between home and school. However, in many inner-city schools, special programs may be needed to obtain the desired levels of parental support. Also, the establishment of a resource room usually requires physical space for the room, sufficient operating funds, and a resource teacher who has expertise in the area of gifted and talented students.

The Hartford, Connecticut, program "Encendiendo Una Llama" ("Lighting a Flame") has been in operation since 1979 and uses a resource room, an after-school program, and a regular classroom component to provide services for gifted and talented minority language students. This program emphasizes language development in English and Spanish, high-level thinking skills, independent work and study skills, and development of creative thinking. It is an integrated program in which English-dominant children also participate. In each of the participating Hartford schools, the bilingual gifted and talented program is the only gifted program in the school, and all children are eligible to participate, regardless of their language background.

### **Parent Involvement Programs**

Many programs include a strong parent involvement component in which parents can help support their children's development at home while the school can be used as an additional resource. Although it is important for all parents to be involved in their children's education, it is particularly critical to develop a strong link between the home and the school for gifted and talented minority language children.

Many programs provide parents with checklists to help assess their children. In addition, programs often provide booklets of home activities through which parents can encourage critical thinking and creativity.

### **Acceleration or Honors Programs**

Many people associate acceleration or honors programs with gifted and talented programs. These programs may include skipping grades, early entrance, early graduation, credit by examination, nongraded classes, and advanced placement classes (Dannenber, 1984). Some gifted students who seem bored in school may benefit from an accelerated program that provides an academic challenge and keeps them involved in school. However, it may be difficult to identify these students, who initially may not be seen as gifted.

Some educators who adhere to the narrow definition of giftedness as high IQ may not feel that an honors program is appropriate for students who fit the broader definition of the able learner. This attitude is refuted in the film *Stand And Deliver*, which is based on a true story about several minority language students at an inner-city school in Los Angeles. These students were not considered gifted by many of their teachers, yet they were the only students in their school to pass the Advanced Placement exams given by the Educational Testing Service for college credit in calculus. Their success can be attributed largely to their mathematics teacher, Jaime Escalante, who had very high expectations for them and refused to believe that they were unable to think critically simply because they were from low-income, minority language backgrounds. He encouraged their participation in these special advanced classes (held at night and on Saturdays in overcrowded, stifling classrooms) to prove to other students, the faculty, and themselves that they were intelligent. Moreover, these students gained new, strong, self-concepts, which inevitably improved their academic skills and gave them the courage and discipline to pursue a college education.

### **Mentor Programs**

Another program model for gifted and talented education is the mentor program. Mentors provide role models for the students, giving them an opportunity to interact with adult professionals. Through the Higher Achievement Program in Washington, DC, elementary and junior high school students from low-income neighborhoods are tutored by volunteers 2 nights a week. To be eligible for the program, students must show a high level of motivation and pass a qualifying examination. One night each week is devoted to verbal skills such as reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing; the second night is

devoted primarily to mathematics and related skills. Critical thinking skills are stressed in all subjects.

The mentor program has many psychological and social benefits for the students and is a low-cost program if the school district recruits area professionals as volunteers. School districts located near universities can encourage them to establish a course in which official credit is given to university students who participate as mentors. If the mentors are sensitive to the needs of particular cultural and linguistic groups, they can provide positive role models for the students. The mentor program concept can be a solution to difficult budget constraints and has been used by numerous school districts around the country.

### **Recommendations for Change**

The following recommendations may improve the assessment and educational programs of gifted and talented minority language students.

- **Broaden the concept of giftedness.** Broadening the concept of giftedness to include able learners will allow for the identification of a greater proportion of gifted minority language students. A broader definition of giftedness may be the first essential step toward identifying and educating gifted and talented minority language students.
- **Expand research on giftedness and minority language students.** Although there is a large body of literature on gifted and talented students in general, there is much less literature on gifted and talented minority language students. This may be because many researchers in the past did not consider minority language students as gifted, based on the traditional measure of giftedness as a high IQ score. Further research is needed on all the able learners in our schools, including minority language students.
- **Employ more well-rounded assessment techniques.** If there is a lower-than-expected proportion of minority language students identified as gifted, then the identification and assessment process should be examined to determine why these students have not been identified. School districts may need to find creative solutions to the problem of how to identify gifted and talented minority language students by using nontraditional methods.

The identification of minority language students can include multiple criteria (with information from as many sources as

possible) that are relevant to the needs of the population. Using multiple instruments can result in a more precise picture because it provides information about students from different perspectives. A combination of assessment instruments can help ensure that a student's ability to participate effectively in a gifted and talented program is adequately measured.

- **Increase staff awareness of their potential for developing a gifted and talented program.** Regardless of the program model selected for implementation, administrators must first examine the resources they have within their school system. Upon entering the school district, teachers could be asked to complete a questionnaire about their abilities and interests and whether or not they would be interested in participating in a gifted and talented program. For example, a teacher who has played piano for 10 years might be interested in teaching a course in music appreciation. Administrators need to be aware of the unique talents within their own staff as they identify local personnel who may be able to contribute their time, effort, and expertise to gifted and talented programs.
- **Explore various program models.** No single model can be recommended as the "best" instructional approach for gifted and talented minority language students, because each population is unique and each program has its own specific goals and objectives. The type of program implemented may depend on several issues such as the instructional model, the talents of the students, the number of gifted students identified, the talents of the professional staff, the availability of qualified personnel, the level of commitment of the school and school system, and budget constraints.
- **Increase awareness of different ways giftedness may be manifested in different populations.** Many students are gifted or talented. Teachers face the challenge of identifying, developing, and supporting their students' talents. Although this may be a challenge, it is also a rewarding experience. Watching students grow to their fullest potential and knowing that, as the teacher, you have played an integral part in your students' growth are great personal and professional triumphs.

## Conclusion

This digest highlights some of the current debates in the education of gifted and talented students focusing on the definition of giftedness, the assessment of gifted students, and the development and implementation of gifted programs. Providing appropriate gifted and talented programs for students from linguistically and culturally

diverse backgrounds is a challenge that many school districts face. Since minority language students represent an increasing percentage of the total school population, meeting the educational needs of gifted minority language students is vital. All students, including minority language students, deserve the most challenging instruction possible.

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Nature and Needs of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

**TOPIC 16 – SOCIO-EMOTIONAL NEEDS**

**KEY QUESTION:** Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Identify the social and emotional needs of gifted students and discuss their implications in determining services.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- Social Needs of Gifted
- Emotional Needs of Gifted
- Determining Services

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- *“Understanding Gifted Kids From the Inside Out”* Chapter 5, When Gifted Kids Don’t Have All the Answers, Jim Delisle & Judy Galbraith
- ERIC #E488: Helping Gifted Students With Stress Management (HO 1)
- NAGC Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Socio-Emotional Guidance and Counseling (HO 2)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Conduct a discussion with students regarding the “Eight Great Gripes of Gifted Kids.” Consider inviting gifted students to participate in discussion.
- Develop and list strategies for dealing with the “Eight Great Gripes of Gifted Kids”(Gifted Kids Survival Guide and/or When Gifted Kids Don’t Have All the Answers)
- Develop an affective board game for students who are gifted that involves the students discussing the social and emotional needs of gifted students. Field test the game with students, have them evaluate it, and include your results along with a detailed explanation and blueprint of the game.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- Active participation in group discussions
- Completed list of strategies
- Completed board game and field testing of game.

**RESOURCES:**

- ERIC Digest #E527 Nurturing Social Emotional Development of Gifted Students <http://ericec.org/digests/e527.html> (see Topic 1)
- ERIC Digest #E488 Helping Gifted Students With Stress Management <http://ericec.org/digests/e488.html>
- NAGC Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Socio-Emotional Guidance and Counseling <http://www.nagc.org/table5.htm>
- The Gifted Kids’ Survival Guide, Galbraith and Delisle
- When Gifted Kids Don’t Have All the Answers, Jim Delisle & Judy Galbraith

## **Helping Gifted Students with Stress Management**

Kaplan, L. S. (1990). Helping gifted students with stress management (ERIC Digest E488). Arlington, VA: The ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted.

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### **What Is Stress?**

Stress is the body's general response to any intense physical, emotional, or mental demand placed on it by oneself or others. While racing to meet a deadline, dealing with a difficult person, or earning a poor grade are all stressful, so are the excitement of playing a lively game of tennis, falling in love, and being selected to join a special program for gifted students.

### **How Can a Youngster Experience Stress When Nothing Bad Is Happening?**

Anything can be a stressor if it lasts long enough, happens often enough, is strong enough, or is perceived as stress. Working diligently on a project, performing many simple but boring tasks, or earning an "A" grade when one expected an "A+" may all be stressful.

### **Is a Gifted Student More Likely to Feel Stress than Others?**

Many gifted youngsters have a heightened sensitivity to their surroundings, to events, to ideas, and to expectations. Some experience their own high expectations for achievement as a relentless pressure to excel. Constant striving to live up to self-expectations--or those of others-- to be first, best, or both can be very stressful. With every new course, new teacher, or new school questions arise about achievement and performance, since every new situation carries with it the frightening risk of being mediocre. Striving becomes even more stressful when unrealistic or unclear expectations are imposed by adults or peers. The pressure to excel, accompanied by other concerns such as feeling different, self-doubt (the "imposter" syndrome), and the need to prove their giftedness can drain the energy of gifted students and result in additional stress. Stress occurs even when everything is going well. Youngsters get tired from their constant efforts and may secretly fear that next time they will not be as successful.

### **What Are Some Other Stresses on a Gifted Student?**

Many gifted students accept responsibility for a variety of activities such as a demanding courseload; leadership in school activities, clubs, or sports; and part-time jobs. Even if it were humanly possible, doing everything well would be physically and emotionally stressful.

Vacations may be stressful if students are comfortable only when achieving and succeeding. Taking time off may make them feel nervous and lacking control. Gifted students need intellectual challenge. Boring, monotonous busy-work is very stressful for individuals who prefer thinking and reasoning activities. Boredom may result in anger, resentment, or, in some cases, setting personal

goals for achievement and success that significantly exceed those of parents or school.

Some gifted students value independence and leadership, yet the separation they feel from their peers results in loneliness and fewer opportunities to relieve stress. Finding a peer group can be difficult, particularly for adolescents. Some experience a conflict between belonging to a group and using their extraordinary abilities.

Gifted students are complex thinkers, persuasively able to argue both sides of any question. This ability, however, may complicate decisions. Students may lack information about and experience with resources, processes, outcomes, or priorities that help tip an argument toward a clear solution. Furthermore, not every problem has one obviously correct answer. Compromise and accommodation are realities in the adult world, but they are not easily perceived from a young person's viewpoint. Thus, decision making may be a very stressful process.

### **How Can Stress Hurt a Gifted Student's Self-esteem?**

During the early years, school may be easy, with minimum effort required for success. If students are not challenged, they conclude that "giftedness" means instant learning, comprehension, and mastery, and that outstanding achievement follows naturally. As years pass, however, schoolwork becomes more difficult.

Some students discover that they must work harder to earn top grades and that they have not developed productive study habits. Many suspect they are no longer gifted, and their sense of self-worth is undermined.

Stress can hamper the very abilities that make these students gifted. Stress clouds thinking, reduces concentration, and impairs decision making. It leads to forgetfulness and a loss of ability to focus keenly on a task, and it makes students overly sensitive to criticism. Under these conditions, they perform less well and are more upset by their failures.

### **Gifted Students Have So Much Potential. How Can That Be Stressful?**

Abundant gifts and the potential for success in many different subjects and careers may increase opportunities and lead to complex choices. Limiting options is a confusing and upsetting process because it means saying "no" to some attractive alternatives. A person cannot prepare to become an architect and a financial planner, or an advertising executive and a scientist. At some point, the education needed for one career splits from that needed for the other. To set career goals, students must know themselves well as individuals. They must understand their own personalities, values, and goals and use self-awareness as a guide for making decisions. These activities are all stressful.

### **How Can Gifted Students Cope with Stress?**

Some ways of coping with stress are healthy; others are not. Some healthy ways of handling stress include the following:

- Change the source of the stress. Do something else for a while. Put down those study notes and jog for an hour.
- Confront the source of the stress. If it is a person, persuade him or her to remove the stress. Ask the teacher for an extension on a project. Sit down with the person driving you crazy and talk about ways you might better work together.
- Talk about the source of stress. Rid yourself of frustration. Find a good listener and complain. Talk through possible solutions.
- Shift your perspective. Tell yourself that each new situation or problem is a new challenge, and that there is something to be learned from every experience. Try to see the humorous side of the situation.
- Learn skills and attitudes that make tasks easier and more successful. Practice effective organization and time-management skills. For example, large projects are easier and less overwhelming when broken down into manageable steps. Learn to type and revise assignments on a word processor. Learn about yourself and your priorities, and use the information to make decisions. Learn how to say "no" gracefully when someone offers you another attractive (or unpleasant) task about which you have a choice. Tell yourself that this unpleasantness will be over soon and that the whole process will bring you closer to reaching your goal. Mark the days that are left on the calendar, and enjoy crossing out each one as you near the finish.
- Take time out for enjoyable activities. Everyone needs a support system. Find friends, teachers, or relatives with whom you have fun. Spend time with these people when you can be yourself and set aside the pressures of school, work, or difficult relationships. As a reward for your efforts, give yourself work breaks. Listen to your favorite music, shoot baskets, or participate in some other brief activity that is mentally restful or fun.
- Ignore the source of the stress. Practice a little healthy procrastination and put a pleasant activity ahead of the stressful one. This, is, of course, only a short-term solution.
- Get regular physical exercise and practice sound nutrition. Physical activity not only provides time out, but also changes your body chemistry as you burn off muscle tension built up from accommodating stress. Exercise also increases resistance to illness. Nutritious food and regular meals help regulate your body chemistry and keep you functioning at your sharpest. Eating healthy and attractively prepared food can be an enjoyable activity on its own.

The following are some unhealthy ways students cope with stress:

- Escaping through alcohol, drugs, frequent illness, sleep, overeating, or starving themselves. These strategies suggest a permanent withdrawal or avoidance rather than a time out.

- Selecting strategies to avoid failure. Gifted students closely link their identities to excellence and achievement. Failure, or even the perception of failure, seriously threatens their self-esteem. By not trying, or by selecting impossible goals, students can escape having their giftedness questioned. Only their lack of effort will be questioned.
- Aiming too low. This reduces stress by eliminating intense pressure or possible feelings of failure. Dogged procrastination in starting projects, selecting less competitive colleges or less rigorous courses, or dropping out of school rather than bringing home poor grades allows students to avoid feelings of failure in the short run. Sadly, this sets the stage for long-term disappointment caused by a destructive coping style.
- Overscheduling daily life with schoolwork and extracurricular activities, selecting impossibly demanding courseloads, or fussing endlessly over assignments in vain attempts to make them perfect. With this strategy, it is possible to succeed only through superhuman effort; thus the student can save face by setting goals too high for anyone to achieve.

### **How Can I Tell Whether or Not a Gifted Student Is Experiencing Burnout?**

Not all gifted youngsters are stressed by the same events. Individual responses to stress also differ: Younger students do not tend to respond to stress in the same way that teenagers do. Since each student is unique, parents and teachers will have to watch carefully to know whether a child is stressed to the point of constructive excitement or to the point of damaging overload.

The following checklist includes many, but not all, symptoms of burnout:

- Student is no longer happy or pleasantly excited about school activities, but, rather, is negative or cynical toward work, teachers, classmates, parents, and the whole school- and achievement-centered experience.
- Student approaches most school assignments with resignation or resentment.
- Student exhibits boredom.
- Student suffers from sleeplessness, problems in falling asleep, or periodic waking.
- Student overreacts to normal concerns or events.
- Student experiences fatigue, extreme tiredness, low energy level.
- Student exhibits unhappiness with self and accomplishments.
- Student has nervous habits such as eye blinking, head shaking, or stuttering.
- Student has physical ailments such as weekly or daily stomachaches or headaches.
- Student is frequently ill.
- Student exhibits dependency through increased clinging or needing and demanding constant support and reassurance.

- \_\_\_ Student engages in attention-getting behaviors such as aggressive or acting-out behaviors.
- \_\_\_ Student has a sense of being trapped or a feeling of being out of control.
- \_\_\_ Student is unable to make decisions.
- \_\_\_ Student has lost perspective and sense of humor.
- \_\_\_ Student experiences increased feelings of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion in work and activities that used to give pleasure.

### **How Can Parents, Teachers, and Counselors Reduce Stress on Gifted Students?**

Help each gifted student understand and cope with his or her intellectual, social, and emotional needs during each stage of development. In some ways, the needs of gifted students mirror those of more typical children. Giftedness, however, adds a special dimension to self-understanding and self-acceptance. If gifted youngsters are to develop into self-fulfilled adults, the following differential needs must be addressed: (a) the need to understand the ways in which they are different from others and the ways in which they are the same; (b) the need to accept their abilities, talents, and limitations; (c) the need to develop social skills; (d) the need to feel understood and accepted by others; and (e) the need to develop an understanding of the distinction between "pursuit of excellence" and "pursuit of perfection." VanTassel-Baska (1989) and Delisle (1988) have offered useful suggestions on how to meet these needs.

Help each gifted student develop a realistic and accurate self-concept. Giftedness does not mean instant mastery or winning awards. Parents and teachers need to set realistic expectations for efforts and achievements and help the student choose appropriate goals. It is important to recognize and appreciate efforts and improvement.

On the other hand, giftedness permits people to learn and use information in unusual ways. Given parental support and encouragement, personal motivation, and opportunities to learn and apply their knowledge, gifted students may enjoy the process of creating new ideas, especially if they believe that it is all right to think differently than age-mates.

Help each gifted student be a whole person. Gifted youngsters are children first and gifted second. While their learning styles may be special, they are individuals with emotions, likes and dislikes, and unique personalities. They will not wake up one day and be "not gifted." They should not feel responsible for solving world problems, nor does the world owe them tribute. It is up to each student to make life meaningful. Understanding these realistic limits to the bounty of giftedness can reduce stress on confused students.

Gifted students have strong emotions that give personal meaning to each experience. Emotions should be recognized, understood, and used as a valid basis for appropriate behaviors.

Show patience. Let students select and strive toward their own goals. Do not compare them or their achievements to others.

Some gifted students are intensely curious and may have less tolerance for ambiguity and unpredictability than their age-mates. Help them develop patience with themselves.

Show acceptance and encouragement. Encourage students to work purposefully, thoughtfully, and thoroughly and do the best they can. It is not necessary to excel in every situation. Help them develop priorities to decide which tasks require the best efforts and which require simply "good enough."

Accept and reward efforts and the process of working on tasks. Sincere effort is valuable in itself and deserves reinforcement. The means may be more deserving of merit than the ends. Efforts are within the gifted students' control; the outcomes (high grades, prizes, honors, etc.) are not. Show love and acceptance, regardless of the outcome. These youngsters need to be cherished as individuals, not simply for their accomplishments. They must know that they can go home and be loved-- and continue to love themselves--even when they do not finish first or best.

Encourage flexibility and appropriate behavior. Curiosity is frequently mentioned as a characteristic of gifted learners. Many individuals agree that gifted students seem to question rules automatically, asking "How come?" Concerned adults can reduce stress on gifted students by helping them distinguish between hard-and-fast rules that should be followed and those that can safely be questioned or altered and helping them understand why rules sometimes change from time to time.

Many people recognize that new ideas come from reshaping and discarding old notions of right and wrong and want students to be inquiring, creative, and resourceful thinkers. But society, schools, teachers, and academic subjects have rules. In our society, flagrant rule breakers may be penalized and shut out of opportunities for further growth and enrichment. Our students will become better thinkers by learning that rules are man-made guides to behavior, not perfect or divine, but they are to be learned, understood, and followed appropriately in certain situations. For instance, not every student will like every teacher, but showing respect is appropriate behavior even if the student privately thinks otherwise. Wise adults can model problem-solving methods that result in workable solutions and help gifted students learn when and how to use their novel perceptions, creativity, and independent thoughts appropriately and effectively.

Understanding and following rules does not mean conforming to every situation. There are some occasions when gifted students should not be expected to accommodate others. For example, a severe mismatch between a youngster's

ability level and a school program may be very stressful. Altering the student's curriculum may solve the problem.

Some parents unintentionally send mixed messages regarding behavior. When children are rude or uncooperative and offend teachers, other adults, or peers, their parents behave as though giftedness somehow excuses such behavior and the offending actions highlight their child's specialness. Some even seem pleased. These parents do their children a great disservice by denying them the opportunity to learn empathy, teamwork, and tolerance for individual differences.

Let students live their own lives. Caring adults support, encourage, and celebrate students' efforts and successes, but they stand back a bit from these efforts and achievements. They let students select and master activities for personal enjoyment. Unfortunately, some students wonder whether their efforts and gains are for personal satisfaction or to please overly involved parents, teachers, or others. When these students wish to give up an activity that no longer brings pleasure or interest, they fear they will disappoint others, and they are likely to feel trapped.

Be available for guidance and advice. Some gifted students appear to be more mature than their chronological age indicates. They have advanced verbal skills and can talk a good line. Nevertheless, they are still children and need realistic, clearly stated guidelines about limits, values, and proper behavior. These young people may not have enough information or experience to make wise and effective decisions. They may not understand decision-making processes, and they need wise adults to listen and guide as they talk through the problem, the alternatives, and the pro's and con's and try out choices. Knowing that they can be independent and still talk through their thoughts with others without losing face reduces stress for these students.

Gifted students need to hear adults openly state some of their perspectives to understand expectations and acceptable limits. While these students are very perceptive, they cannot read minds.

Gifted students may know more facts about their interest area than do their parents and other adults. However, they have not lived longer; they need loving concern and guidance.

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<b>Gifted Education Programming Criterion:            Socio-Emotional Guidance and Counseling</b>		
<b>Description: Gifted education programming must establish a plan to recognize and nurture the unique socio-emotional development of gifted learners.</b>		
Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. Gifted learners must be provided with differentiated guidance efforts to meet their unique socio-emotional development.	1.0m Gifted learners, because of their unique socio-emotional development, must be provided with guidance and counseling services by a counselor who is familiar with the characteristics and socio-emotional needs of gifted learners.	1.0e Counseling services should be provided by a counselor familiar with specific training in the characteristics and socio-emotional needs (i.e., underachievement, multipotentiality, etc.) of diverse gifted learners.
2. Gifted learners must be provided with career guidance services especially designed for their unique needs.	2.0m Gifted learners must be provided with career guidance consistent with their unique strengths.	2.0e Gifted learners should be provided with college and career guidance that is appropriately different and delivered earlier than typical programs.
3. Gifted at-risk students must be provided with guidance and counseling to help them reach their potential.	3.0m Gifted learners who are placed at-risk must have special attention, counseling, and support to help them realize their full potential.	3.0e Gifted learners who do not demonstrate satisfactory performance in regular and/or gifted education classes should be provided with specialized intervention services.
4. Gifted learners must be provided with affective curriculum in addition to differentiated guidance and counseling services.	4.0m Gifted learners must be provided with affective curriculum as part of differentiated curriculum and instructional services.	4.0e A well-defined and implemented affective curriculum scope and sequence containing personal/social awareness and adjustment, academic planning, and vocational and career awareness should be provided to gifted learners.
5. Underachieving gifted learners must be served rather than omitted from differentiated services.	5.0m Gifted students who are underachieving must not be exited from gifted programs because of related problems.	5.0e Underachieving gifted learners should be provided with specific guidance and counseling services that address the issues and problems related to underachievement.

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# Nature and Needs of the Gifted

## Gifted Endorsement Module

### TOPIC 17 – NATIONAL EVALUATION

**KEY QUESTION:** Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Discuss the positive and negative perceptions of various stakeholders regarding gifted education and compare to the perspectives presented in the federal report, “National Excellence: A Case for Developing America’s Talent”

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- perceptions of stakeholders
- positive perceptions
- negative perceptions
- federal report perceptions

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- ERIC EC Digest #E525: Blending Gifted Education and School Reform (HO 1)
- “Survey on Beliefs and Attitudes Regarding Gifted Programs” Project GAGE 1993 (HO 2)
- “Beliefs About Education for Gifted Students” Project GAGE 1993 (HO 3)
- “National Excellence: A Case for Developing America’s Talent” Part 1 page 5-14 (see Topic 4)
- ERIC EC Digest #E476 Giftedness and the Gifted: What’s it All About? (see Topic 1)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Role play/ debate why gifted students need different programs and curricular options as various stakeholders: parents of gifted and non-gifted, classroom teacher, teacher of gifted, gifted and non-gifted student, administrator, support staff, custodian, etc.
- Create a T-chart (pro and con listing) or matrix with comparisons of various stakeholders.
- Summarize ERIC documents and/or Think, Pair, Share discussions.
- Complete “Survey on Beliefs and Attitudes Regarding Gifted Programs” from Project GAGE.

•

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- active participation in discussions and role-play
- completed T-charts or matrices.
- completed document summaries
- completed GAGE survey

## Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

### **RESOURCES:**

- “National Excellence: A Case for Developing America’s Talent”  
<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/>
- ERIC EC Digest #E476 <http://ericec.org/digests/e476.html>
- ERIC EC Digest #E525 <http://ericec.org/digests/e525.html>
- “Survey on Beliefs and Attitudes Regarding Gifted Programs” Project GAGE 1993
- Beliefs About Education for Gifted Students” Project GAGE 1993

## **Blending Gifted Education and School Reform**

Hanninen, G. E. (1994). *Blending gifted education and school reform* (ERIC Digest E525). Reston, VA: ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education. (ERIC Document ED371520)

School reform initiatives have resulted in many changes in American education during the past decade. The complexity of the process has presented numerous challenges for every educator. Juxtaposed against the reform climate are several other changes that have affected American classrooms: changing demographics, increasing diversity of student populations, and limited fiscal resources. It is within this broad context that the needs of our most capable youth must be challenged. This digest provides a process for assuring that the unique needs of students who are gifted are addressed within the context of systemic reform. Several key elements guide the process: creating belief statements, clarifying the issues, and designing strategies for implementation.

### **CREATING BELIEF STATEMENTS**

Belief statements define systemic parameters as reflected in a district's vision statement and expected outcomes. For example, what is believed about students who are gifted is based on what is believed about all learners. Creating belief statements about all learners is guided by the following questions:

- 1. What do we believe (about all learners)?
- 2. What do we know?
- 3. What do we want?
- 4. What do we do?

Processing these questions generates a set of district or school level belief statements, vision statements, and expected outcomes that will affect the entire community. Discussion should include educators and parents of students who are gifted and talented as well as other representatives from various special interests groups. By working individually, in small groups or as a whole, each person generates belief statements. The general discussion provides an opportunity to examine beliefs individuals hold about students who are gifted and talented. Through a process of narrowing down the statements, each small group lists five most strongly held statements. Later, when groups combine their statements, a list of 10 to 15 strongly held belief statements provides an organizational profile. A second list of belief statements may also be generated around the question, "What do you believe about programs for students who are gifted/talented?"

### **CLARIFYING THE ISSUES**

To understand elements of systemic change, each educator needs to clarify the issues. Again, a key question guides the process: "As you reflect upon what you know about education reform, the best practices in education, and your experience with students who are gifted/talented, what are the critical issues that come to your mind?" Identifying the five most important critical issues helps narrow the topics of concern and focus discussion.

## DESIGNING STRATEGIES

Developing a successful relationship between education reform efforts and gifted education is linked to five key strategies:

1. Analyze the language.
2. List key decision makers, stakeholders, and risk takers.
3. Infuse gifted/talented into several school policies.
4. Visualize the desired direction.
5. Enact equitable access to resources.

The acronym "ALIVE" means that each strategy incorporates valuable information gleaned in one of the other strategies and does not function in isolation.

ANALYZE THE LANGUAGE refers to interpreting what is really being said. For example, the concept of inclusionary programs sounds very altruistic, but might mean "inclusion of special education students only" in the regular school setting. In this example, students such as those being served by Chapter 1 programs, gifted programs, or English as a Second Language (ESL) programs may continue to be excluded from inclusive schools because the terminology has multiple meanings.

Language in vision statements, district policies, and expected outcomes can also be used to benefit students who are gifted. The following statement of purpose uses several helpful words and phrases: "The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy" (Ministry of Education, 1991). Words like "individual," "each," and "potential" are inviting. Collective words such as "all," "they" and "everyone" can be misleading. Finding terms that are links to systemic parameters is crucial to embedding special services in policy, linking a school system with the community, and developing a shared vision.

## LIST KEY DECISION MAKERS, STAKEHOLDERS, AND RISK TAKERS

means identifying individuals and groups who are strategic influencers. The people most affected by school system changes need to be included in discussions from the beginning. The number of persons needs to be manageable. The group should represent a broad range of constituencies, including students, parents, teachers, administrators, and members of the community. When choosing community members, keep in mind that key individuals who have credibility with and the respect of their colleagues will influence support for change.

INFUSE GIFTED/TALENTED INTO SEVERAL SCHOOL POLICIES implies that well-written local district policies provide a basis for developing quality program services for all students, including those who are gifted. Although services for students who are gifted need to be defined in a specific program policy, they should also be interspersed throughout broader policy statements on curriculum, instruction, counseling, special populations, parent involvement, and staff development.

The following excerpt from a local district policy statement reflects that community's beliefs and priority for programming: "Challenge their multiple intelligences and engage students with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds." This example depicts a connectedness to the whole district and supports the district's need to address "multiple intelligences" and "diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds" of all students. Thus, infusing services that meet the needs of students who are gifted/talented into local policy statements can work two ways.

VISUALIZE THE DESIRED DIRECTION means that within the context of the total school system, design a clearly stated and concise framework for delivering services to students who are gifted. Such a design should challenge the future and illustrate not only a relationship of such services to the total system, but also provide accountability for a continuum of services from kindergarten through 12th grade.

ENACT EQUITABLE ACCESS TO RESOURCES means using the first four strategies to build equitable access to resources in a defensible manner. The notion that the "squeaky wheel gets the grease" is often true because special interest groups have gained an audience and power. Comprehensive quality services to students are not developed by squeaky wheels, but instead are the result of well planned efforts reflecting the beliefs and commitments of several constituencies. Equitable access to resources also implies that resources are based on the needs of students and not solely on the needs of teachers or administrators.

By using these five key strategies, a healthy relationship with the different education reform efforts becomes possible. Each education reform strategy can be accepted by educators of the gifted as an opportunity rather than a barrier.

A Gifted Leadership Conference in the state of Washington demonstrated one way that using this process can generate strategies for blending gifted education and school reform. Participants identified eight education reform efforts affecting services to highly capable students. The resulting product, created by the 41 participants, was entitled: "The

Reform Movement: Where Do Gifted Students Fit?" (Fascilla, Hanninen, & Spritzer,, 1991). The following reform strategies, excerpted from the original publication, illustrate how bridges in thinking can be built between education reform and gifted education.

### **GROUPING: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS WITH GIFTED STUDENTS**

Six guidelines to use when considering grouping options (Rogers, 1991):

- 1. Students who are academically or intellectually gifted and talented should spend the majority of their school day with others of similar abilities and interests.
- 2. Cluster grouping of students within an otherwise heterogeneously grouped classroom can be considered when schools cannot support a full-time gifted program.
- 3. In the absence of full-time gifted program enrollment, students might be offered specific group instruction across grade levels, according to their individual knowledge acquisition in school subjects.
- 4. Gifted students should be given experiences involving a variety of appropriate acceleration-based options, which may be offered to gifted students as a group or on an individual basis.
- 5. Students should be given experiences which involve various forms of enrichment that extend the regular school curriculum, leading to the more complete development of concepts, principles, and generalizations.
- 6. Mixed-ability cooperative learning groups should be used sparingly, perhaps only for social skills development programs.

### **OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS WITH GIFTED**

#### **LEARNERS**

- 1. Maintain programs for gifted until acceptable options are available, that is, acceleration, self-contained classes, or advanced classes.
- 2. Educate all staff so that they are able to identify and provide appropriate curriculum for gifted students.
- 3. Pretest before initial instruction, and provide gifted students credit for prior learning.
- 4. Provide an enriched curriculum for all students and acceleration and/or in-depth study for gifted students.
- 5. Ensure opportunities for flexibility in scheduling so that students can be appropriately grouped and regrouped.

- 6. Provide gifted students the opportunity to work with their academic or intellectual peers/mentors.
- 7. Match new learning experiences that capitalize on the students' strengths and interests to the expected student outcomes, and provide appropriate assessment options.
- 8. Match the curriculum to the student's learning rate.
- 9. Eliminate the ceiling on learning (i.e., if a student is ready to learn algebra in 5th grade, the system must not only permit it, it should support it).
- 10. Extend the depth and breadth of the lessons.

Within each education reform strategy, ideas were presented that respect the integrity of the research and assure appropriate learning opportunities for students who are gifted.

All students in our schools, including those who are gifted, deserve the best education we are capable of providing. On the one hand, education reform efforts reflect those approaches deemed necessary to accomplish that goal. On the other hand, gifted education has frequently been perceived as being the best in education provided only for "the best." If the aim of education reform is that all students should experience "gifted teaching," then the expertise and support of educators of the gifted should be a part of those efforts. Concurrently, all educators need to acknowledge that "gifted teaching" does not necessarily mean effectively "teaching the gifted." Knowing the difference depends upon understanding the nature of a student's gifts and talents. It also means placing greater value on each student's strengths.

The keys to successful education reform for students who are gifted results in educators and parents who can continually:

- 1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the education reform strategies used in their districts.
- 2. Review the quality and clarify the relationship of educational services for students who are gifted.
- 3. Understand the complexity of the "big picture" as different education reform strategies are institutionalized in schools and beliefs about services for students who are gifted are incorporated.

Education reform is an opportunity for professionals in gifted education to recognize what works, what does not work, where "hitchhiking" on the ideas of others is wise, and to understand the changes that are needed to assure excellence in learning and character development. An inevitable outcome will be better schools for all students.

## RESOURCES

Fascilla, P., Hanninen, G. E., & Spritzer, D. (Eds.). (1991). THE REFORM MOVEMENT: WHERE DO GIFTED STUDENTS FIT? Olympia, WA: Gifted Leadership Conference, c/o OSPI.

Ministry of Education (1991). SUPPORTING LEARNING: UNDERSTANDING AND ASSESSING THE PROGRESS OF CHILDREN IN THE PRIMARY PROGRAM. Province of British Columbia.

Rogers, K. (1991). THE RELATIONSHIP OF GROUPING PRACTICES TO THE EDUCATION OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED LEARNER: AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. Storrs, CT: The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.

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### **SURVEY ON BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES REGARDING GIFTED PROGRAMS**

*This survey is designed to assess your current beliefs and attitudes about gifted education. There are no right or wrong answers. Rate these statements using a scale from 0 (low) to 4 (high) according to your level of agreement. For items for which you have no opinion, please mark NOP and for items for which you do not have adequate information or experience to judge, mark NA. Please use a code name to preserve your anonymity. Individual responses will be tallied to build a picture of the group's general beliefs and attitudes.*

1. \_\_\_\_ Special programs are needed to serve the needs of students identified as gifted.
2. \_\_\_\_ Students identified as gifted cannot be adequately served in the regular classroom.
3. \_\_\_\_ More than one gifted service model is needed to adequately meet the needs of gifted students.
4. \_\_\_\_ Only identified gifted students should be served in gifted programs.
5. \_\_\_\_ The gifted program should connect with the general education curriculum.
6. \_\_\_\_ Parents of gifted students are supportive of gifted programs regardless of the quality.
7. \_\_\_\_ Other teachers in my school understand the nature and importance of the gifted program.
8. \_\_\_\_ Regular classroom teachers are generally good at identifying students who are gifted.
9. \_\_\_\_ The gifted program should generally reflect the district's ethnic and economic demographics.
10. \_\_\_\_ Gifted students can and should receive additional services in the general education class that meet their needs.

Project G.A.G.E. (1993)

### **Beliefs about Education for Gifted Students**

- Gifted education professionals and advocates must collaborate with educators, parents, and the public/private sectors to promote school reform.
- Gifted educational practices may be appropriate for all students but are essential for gifted students.
- More students in Florida are gifted than are currently identified.
- A variety of sources must be used when defining giftedness and identifying students for gifted programs.
- Gifted students have diverse talents, needs, and abilities that require differentiated programming.
- Expanded opportunities for gifted students must be promoted and assured to help them achieve maximum expectations.
- Schools and communities must understand the importance of promoting education for gifted students.
- Equity of resources to educate gifted students must be assured.

Project G.A.G.E. (1993)

# Nature and Needs of the Gifted

## Gifted Endorsement Module

### TOPIC 18 – THE EFFECTIVE TEACHER

**KEY QUESTION:** Why do gifted students need different programs and curricular options?

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Describe the characteristics of an effective teacher of gifted students.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- characteristics of effective teacher of gifted

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- NAGC Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Professional Development (HO 1)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Brainstorm and list characteristics of an effective teacher of the gifted.
- Create a T-chart cross-referencing identified characteristics with unique needs often associated with gifted learners.
- Create a cartoon, drawing, or caricature of an effective teacher of the gifted
- Role play an effective teacher of the gifted (include costumes, props). Contrast with role-play of ineffective teacher of the gifted.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed list of characteristics of an effective teacher of the gifted
- completed T-chart
- completed cartoon, drawing, or caricature
- active participation in role play.

**RESOURCES:**

- “Who Should Teach the Gifted” Imogene Ramsey *The Clearing House*, 1990, Vol. 63
- NAGC Position Paper: *Competencies Needed by Teachers of Gifted and Talented Students*
- NAGC Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Professional Development <http://www.nagc.org/table6.htm>
- *Gifted Child Quarterly*, Volume 40, No.3 Summer 1996

### Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Professional Development

**Description: Gifted learners are entitled to be served by professionals who have specialized preparation in gifted education, expertise in appropriate differentiated content and instructional methods, involvement in ongoing professional development, and who possess exemplary personal and professional traits.**

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
<p>1. A comprehensive staff development program must be provided for all school staff involved in the education of gifted learners.</p>	<p>1.0m All school staff must be made aware of the nature and needs of gifted students.</p> <p>1.1m Teachers of gifted students must attend at least one professional development activity a year designed specifically for teaching gifted learners.</p>	<p>1.0e All school staff should be provided ongoing staff development in the nature and needs of gifted learners, and appropriate instructional strategies.</p> <p>1.1e All teachers of gifted learners should continue to be actively engaged in the study of gifted education through staff development or graduate degree programs.</p>
<p>2. Only qualified personnel should be involved in the education of gifted learners.</p>	<p>2.0m All personnel working with gifted learners must be certified to teach in the area to which they are assigned, and must be aware of the unique learning differences and needs of gifted learners at the grade level at which they are teaching.</p> <p>2.1m All specialist teachers in gifted education must hold or be actively working toward a certification (or the equivalent) in gifted education in the state in which they teach.</p> <p>2.2m Any teacher whose primary responsibility for teaching includes gifted learners, must have extensive expertise in gifted education.</p>	<p>2.0e All personnel working with gifted learners should participate in regular staff development programs.</p> <p>2.1e All specialist teachers in gifted education should possess a certification/specialization or degree in gifted education.</p> <p>2.2e Only teachers with advanced expertise in gifted education should have primary responsibility for the education of gifted learners.</p>
<p>3. School personnel require support for their specific efforts related to the education of gifted learners.</p>	<p>3.0m School personnel must be released from their professional duties to participate in staff development efforts in gifted education.</p>	<p>3.0e Approved staff development activities in gifted education should be funded at least in part by school districts or educational agencies.</p>
<p>4. The educational staff must be provided with time and other support for the preparation and development of the differentiated education</p>	<p>4.0m School personnel must be allotted planning time to prepare for the differentiated education of gifted learners.</p>	<p>4.0e Regularly scheduled planning time (e.g., release time, summer pay, etc.) should be allotted to teachers for the development of differentiated educational programs and related resources.</p>

plans, materials, curriculum.		
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**Table 6 of 7**

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# Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

## TOPIC 19 – DEFINITIONS AND LAWS

**KEY QUESTION:** What else should you consider?

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Demonstrate knowledge of the changing nature of state and national definitions of gifted.
- Identify the laws that directly impact gifted students and programs in Florida, including the relationship between exceptional student education and gifted programs

### **KEY CONCEPTS:**

- changes in state definition
- changes in national definition
- state gifted student laws
- state gifted program laws.

### **RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- State Resources for Gifted Education—  
<http://ericec.org/fact/stateres.html> (see Topic 14 HO 1)
- *Florida Administrative Code* (FAC) State Rule for Gifted (see Topic 9 HO 1)

### **LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Using the state resources and state definitions articles, choose two states that you have either lived in or have relatives or friends living in and compare and contrast the definitions of gifted in these two states. Prepare a chart to illustrate or summarize your findings.
- Create chart listing salient points of Florida's state rule for gifted\_vis-à-vis other exceptionalities.

### **EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed data spreadsheet and/or charts depicting common traits of states in defining gifted; active participation in group discussions
- completed charts.

### **RESOURCES:**

- State Resources for Gifted Education—  
<http://ericec.org/fact/stateres.html>
- Kristen R. Stephens and Frances A. Karnes, "State Definitions for the Gifted and Talented Revisited", *Exceptional Children*, 66, 219-238. (refer to Q2, Obj. 2)
- *Florida Administrative Code* (FAC) State Rule for Gifted as per Chapter 6A-6.03019 <http://fac.dos.state.fl.us/faconline/chapter06.pdf> pp 152-153

Nature and Need of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

**TOPIC 20 – HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY**

**KEY QUESTION:** What else should you consider?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Demonstrate understanding of major historical and contemporary trends that influence gifted education.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- major historical trends in gifted education
- major contemporary trends/influences.

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- “A Century of Gifted Education” (HO 1)
- “The Top 10 Events in Gifted Education” (HO 2)
- “My view of the "Top 10" events that have influenced the field of gifted education during the past century” (HO 3)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- List the major events affecting the development of gifted education in the US and FL. Use that list to prepare a timeline of major events affecting the development of gifted education.
- Create a graphic representation or web illustrating the salient points of the selected readings.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed list and timeline
- completed graphic representation or web.

**RESOURCES:**

- A Century of Gifted Education. *Gifted Child Today Magazine*, Nov/Dec. 1999.  
<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Did=000000047034484&Fmt=3&Del=1&Mtd=1&Idx=3&Sid=1&RQT=309>
- “The Top 10 Events in Gifted Education”. *Gifted Child Today Magazine*, Nov/Dec. 1999.  
<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Did=000000047034510&Fmt=3&Del=1&Mtd=1&Idx=7&Sid=1&RQT=309>
- My view of the "Top 10" events that have influenced the field of gifted education during the past century: *Gifted Child Today Magazine*; Mobile; Nov/Dec 1999; Patricia A Haensly;  
<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Did=000000047034474&Fmt=3&Del=1&Mtd=1&Idx=6&Sid=1&RQT=309>

Nature and Need of the Gifted  
Gifted Endorsement Module

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- completed graphic representation or web.

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- “The Top 10 Events in Gifted Education”. *Gifted Child Today Magazine*, Nov/Dec. 1999.  
<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Did=000000047034510&Fmt=3&Del=1&Mtd=1&Idx=7&Sid=1&RQT=309>
- My view of the "Top 10" events that have influenced the field of gifted education during the past century: *Gifted Child Today Magazine*; Mobile; Nov/Dec 1999; Patricia A Haensly;  
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### **A Century of Gifted Education**

Imbeau, M. B. (1999). A Century of Gifted Education. *Child Today Magazine*; Mobile;

#### A REFLECTION OF WHO AND WHAT MADE A DIFFERENCE

When asked to reflect on my views of the 10 most important influences that have affected a field of education of which I have been involved for almost 20 years, I found that there was much to consider, much to evaluate, and much to find personally significant. I have selected the specific significant events and persons because each category has influenced my thinking and practice as an educator and researcher. The influences are outlined, not in the order of importance, but rather in the order they would fall on a timeline of this century. I hope my journey provides an opportunity for others to consider their own influences and build their work "upon the shoulders of others."

#### Intelligence Testing

I begin my travel near the beginning of the century considering the work of Lewis Terman and others who believed that being able to determine who might have special abilities in need of development would be important to education. Having studied with the masters of his day in test development and human assessment, Terman and his colleagues developed the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test. Unlike his French counterpart, Alfred Binet, Terman studied those individuals who tested at the upper limits of the instrument and to learn more about their unique cognitive and affective characteristics. While current researchers can easily find flaws in his design and the limited range of children who began in his monumental study, the significance is no less important. He wanted to confirm that highly intelligent individuals possessed specific traits that were in need of development and not any more likely to develop neurosis than less abled persons. His work in this area remains unparalleled. Our field continues to look for improved methods of spotting talent and identifying student strengths and needs and I suspect the area of assessment will continue to be one of challenge, controversy, and importance to the education of the gifted.

#### World Wars

While it may seem somewhat odd to add wars as an influence to any field of education, I believe they have had an impact. The involvement of the United States as a force and defender of persons, both here and across the globe, has certainly forced our leaders to seek other leaders. Fostering the leadership capabilities of those who have such a talent may ultimately be our way of preserving a system of education that believes it is a birth right that all individuals receive an education and one our nation holds dear.

The era surrounding war called on persons to develop specific inventions of materials and strategy and, therefore, fostered the development of those skills that would logically be incorporated into our educational system. The old adage "necessity is the mother of invention" applies when considering the tools necessary to defend democracy. Additionally, the issue of human rights was very much at the center of our involvement in these wars. The development of caring individuals, who would use their intelligence and talents to further the causes of others, continues to be an effort that our field, and education in general, must keep as a part of our ultimate purpose.

### Sputnik Legislation, and Educational Funding

Our nation's view as a world power and a leader was certainly threatened with the Russian's launch of Sputnik. This event is often cited as a beginning of our field of education in this country because the hope of keeping such an event from happening in the future depended on an educated citizenry. In particular, the fields of math and science were seen as the means of making sure we had the talent to lead the world in our exploration of space. While present day efforts appear to be much more collaborative in nature, the continued comparisons to other countries on international measures will most likely be common in our future. More advanced and rigorous courses in these areas continue with our advanced placement programs and the national standards in these fields and others.

The event of Sputnik also began a more focused effort by Congress to appropriate money to fund accelerated programs for advanced students. The role of Congress in gifted education has been one of sporadic involvement. While grants for the development of leaders in our field followed the Marland Report (Marland, 1972) in the early 70s, the most significant influence in our field from Congress was the passing of the Javits Act in 1988. This legislation reestablished the Federal Office of Gifted and Talented and established the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. A primary focus of the Javits Act addressed the need for training and research initiatives that would better identify and serve students who had gifts and talents particularly, from those populations who had been, and continue to be, underserved. Current legislation before Congress, with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary School Act, would continue this work while significantly increasing the level of funding to states to serve gifted students and better prepare teachers to meet the needs of these children.

### Civil Rights

A significant change in education from the first half of this century to the last half must surely be credited to the Civil Rights movement. Although the movement was a part of my youth, it has always been important to me because it significantly affected my view of whom we should be concerned about in our schools ... everyone. On a very personal level, I believe I was destined to be a part of this effort since I was born in Topeka, KS one month before the Brown vs. Board of Education decision. I later moved to Arkansas and attended school only to learn the significance of that court decision through my study of history and attending Little Rock Central High School. Although I was only an elementary student when Congress passed the Civil Rights of 1964, and in junior high when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed, I realized the tremendous efforts of those who struggle against injustice. This struggle struck me as the very heart of what all education should be about. I knew that highly qualified educators would be needed to support this effort, and I knew before I left high school that I would make teaching my life's work. While the Civil Rights movement has been extremely personal to me, I believe it is tremendously important to gifted education because it forces us to reconsider all groups in whom talent may be found. In our field, current efforts in addressing the needs of a diverse population of learners continue to be one of the most significant challenges for us to carry into the next century.

### Organizations

The work of two significant national organizations, The Association of the Gifted [CEC-TAG] and the National Association of the Gifted and Talented [NAGC] have influenced our field. The leadership of these organizations over the years has included our field's most outstanding researchers and

N&N Topic 20 HO 1

<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Did=000000047034484&Fmt=3&Deli=1&Mtd=1&Idx=3&Sid=1&RQT=309>

educators who have helped to shape policy, to develop teacher preparation programs, and to influence the wide array of services provided to students in our schools. These organizations have further influenced our field by participating in legislative matters and setting professional standards for programs. For those who teach in programs, these organizations have created innovative curricula and services, and communicated to the public specific issues important to our work on behalf of students who have gifts and talents. One's membership and involvement in these organizations continues to be a primary means of staying current in gifted education. The growing annual attendances of NAGC and CEC (Council for Exceptional Children) conferences are evidence that many educators are interested in being a part of the latest in educational developments. Educational organizations have influenced the education of the gifted. Policies on how diverse learners would best be served in our nation's schools continue to be highlighted during conversations of membership and leadership with parents, educators, and administrators.

### Creativity

The study of creativity has had a tremendous impact on the field of gifted education during this century and promises to continue into the next. Few people would question how important the development of one's creative talent is in light of present and future problems that need innovative solutions. Further, we have come to expect new developments in all fields of human endeavor, and, while content specific knowledge can not be overlooked, it is the creative element that is often necessary to put such knowledge into practice or extend it to new contexts. Many programs and services that have become commonplace in our nation's schools often emphasize the study of creativity to some degree. Unfortunately, my observations of some classrooms make the nourishment of such talent difficult because of the already "tight" schedule of classes and the emphasis on standardized test scores for measuring student learning appears to restrict the opportunity to fully develop new ideas, solutions, and products. Perhaps the current emphasis on performance-based assessment holds promise for the development of youngsters' creativity if such a practice values innovative thinking. Piirto (1999) suggests the emphasis on creativity training should not be solely conducted in the program for the education of the talented. Schools that want to emphasize creative thinking in their programs for the education of the gifted may want to look at this requirement and focus on developing the student who is creative at something. A creative thinker who has nothing to think about is not creative. Training in creative thinking should be viewed as what it is -process training-an aspect of the curriculum, but not the content of the curriculum. (p. 165)

### **A Century of Gifted Education**

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#### A REFLECTION OF WHO AND WHAT MADE A DIFFERENCE

When asked to reflect on my views of the 10 most important influences that have affected a field of education of which I have been involved for almost 20 years, I found that there was much to consider, much to evaluate, and much to find personally significant. I have selected the specific significant events and persons because each category has influenced my thinking and practice as an educator and researcher. The influences are outlined, not in the order of importance, but rather in the order they would fall on a timeline of this century. I hope my journey provides an opportunity for others to consider their own influences and build their work "upon the shoulders of others."

#### Intelligence Testing

I begin my travel near the beginning of the century considering the work of Lewis Terman and others who believed that being able to determine who might have special abilities in need of development would be important to education. Having studied with the masters of his day in test development and human assessment, Terman and his colleagues developed the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test. Unlike his French counterpart, Alfred Binet, Terman studied those individuals who tested at the upper limits of the instrument and to learn more about their unique cognitive and affective characteristics. While current researchers can easily find flaws in his design and the limited range of children who began in his monumental study, the significance is no less important. He wanted to confirm that highly intelligent individuals possessed specific traits that were in need of development and not any more likely to develop neurosis than less abled persons. His work in this area remains unparalleled. Our field continues to look for improved methods of spotting talent and identifying student strengths and needs and I suspect the area of assessment will continue to be one of challenge, controversy, and importance to the education of the gifted.

#### World Wars

While it may seem somewhat odd to add wars as an influence to any field of education, I believe they have had an impact. The involvement of the United States as a force and defender of persons, both here and across the globe, has certainly forced our leaders to seek other leaders. Fostering the leadership capabilities of those who have such a talent may ultimately be our way of preserving a system of education that believes it is a birth right that all individuals receive an education and one our nation holds dear.

The era surrounding war called on persons to develop specific inventions of materials and strategy and, therefore, fostered the development of those skills that would logically be incorporated into our educational system. The old adage "necessity is the mother of invention" applies when considering the tools necessary to defend democracy. Additionally, the issue of human rights was very much at the center of our involvement in these wars. The development of caring individuals, who would use their intelligence and talents to further the causes of others, continues to be an effort that our field, and education in general, must keep as a part of our ultimate purpose.

### Sputnik Legislation, and Educational Funding

Our nation's view as a world power and a leader was certainly threatened with the Russian's launch of Sputnik. This event is often cited as a beginning of our field of education in this country because the hope of keeping such an event from happening in the future depended on an educated citizenry. In particular, the fields of math and science were seen as the means of making sure we had the talent to lead the world in our exploration of space. While present day efforts appear to be much more collaborative in nature, the continued comparisons to other countries on international measures will most likely be common in our future. More advanced and rigorous courses in these areas continue with our advanced placement programs and the national standards in these fields and others.

The event of Sputnik also began a more focused effort by Congress to appropriate money to fund accelerated programs for advanced students. The role of Congress in gifted education has been one of sporadic involvement. While grants for the development of leaders in our field followed the Marland Report (Marland, 1972) in the early 70s, the most significant influence in our field from Congress was the passing of the Javits Act in 1988. This legislation reestablished the Federal Office of Gifted and Talented and established the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. A primary focus of the Javits Act addressed the need for training and research initiatives that would better identify and serve students who had gifts and talents particularly, from those populations who had been, and continue to be, underserved. Current legislation before Congress, with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary School Act, would continue this work while significantly increasing the level of funding to states to serve gifted students and better prepare teachers to meet the needs of these children.

### Civil Rights

A significant change in education from the first half of this century to the last half must surely be credited to the Civil Rights movement. Although the movement was a part of my youth, it has always been important to me because it significantly affected my view of whom we should be concerned about in our schools ... everyone. On a very personal level, I believe I was destined to be a part of this effort since I was born in Topeka, KS one month before the Brown vs. Board of Education decision. I later moved to Arkansas and attended school only to learn the significance of that court decision through my study of history and attending Little Rock Central High School. Although I was only an elementary student when Congress passed the Civil Rights of 1964, and in junior high when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed, I realized the tremendous efforts of those who struggle against injustice. This struggle struck me as the very heart of what all education should be about. I knew that highly qualified educators would be needed to support this effort, and I knew before I left high school that I would make teaching my life's work. While the Civil Rights movement has been extremely personal to me, I believe it is tremendously important to gifted education because it forces us to reconsider all groups in whom talent may be found. In our field, current efforts in addressing the needs of a diverse population of learners continue to be one of the most significant challenges for us to carry into the next century.

### Organizations

The work of two significant national organizations, The Association of the Gifted [CEC-TAG] and the National Association of the Gifted and Talented [NAGC] have influenced our field. The leadership of these organizations over the years has included our field's most outstanding researchers and

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educators who have helped to shape policy, to develop teacher preparation programs, and to influence the wide array of services provided to students in our schools. These organizations have further influenced our field by participating in legislative matters and setting professional standards for programs. For those who teach in programs, these organizations have created innovative curricula and services, and communicated to the public specific issues important to our work on behalf of students who have gifts and talents. One's membership and involvement in these organizations continues to be a primary means of staying current in gifted education. The growing annual attendances of NAGC and CEC (Council for Exceptional Children) conferences are evidence that many educators are interested in being a part of the latest in educational developments. Educational organizations have influenced the education of the gifted. Policies on how diverse learners would best be served in our nation's schools continue to be highlighted during conversations of membership and leadership with parents, educators, and administrators.

### Creativity

The study of creativity has had a tremendous impact on the field of gifted education during this century and promises to continue into the next. Few people would question how important the development of one's creative talent is in light of present and future problems that need innovative solutions. Further, we have come to expect new developments in all fields of human endeavor, and, while content specific knowledge can not be overlooked, it is the creative element that is often necessary to put such knowledge into practice or extend it to new contexts. Many programs and services that have become commonplace in our nation's schools often emphasize the study of creativity to some degree. Unfortunately, my observations of some classrooms make the nourishment of such talent difficult because of the already "tight" schedule of classes and the emphasis on standardized test scores for measuring student learning appears to restrict the opportunity to fully develop new ideas, solutions, and products. Perhaps the current emphasis on performance-based assessment holds promise for the development of youngsters' creativity if such a practice values innovative thinking. Piirto (1999) suggests the emphasis on creativity training should not be solely conducted in the program for the education of the talented. Schools that want to emphasize creative thinking in their programs for the education of the gifted may want to look at this requirement and focus on developing the student who is creative at something. A creative thinker who has nothing to think about is not creative. Training in creative thinking should be viewed as what it is -process training-an aspect of the curriculum, but not the content of the curriculum. (p. 165)

### **The Top 10 Events Creating Gifted Education for the New Century**

Roberts, J. L. (1999). The Top 10 Events Creating Gifted Education for the New Century *Gifted Child Today Magazine*; Mobile; AL

The framework used to select 10 events in gifted education in this century was to ask what are the major events which have shaped the field as we are entering the year 2000. Which reports, issues, areas of emphasis, and occurrences have impacted the ways that children and adolescents who are gifted and talented are recognized and provided with services? What has been the impact of each of these important events in shaping the future of gifted education in the next century?

The Top 10 that will be described are not in order of importance, but rather they are presented in an approximate chronological order with the effect of the 10 events being seen as cumulative. Each event is important in and of itself, however, the impact of each is greater when it is seen in light of the other events. The Top 10 I have selected all have national impact, yet their selection was made with an eye to my perspective on the critical nature some of them have had on the education of gifted and talented youth in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

#### Number One

In 1957, the launching of Sputnik I shook the confidence of the public in the United States, making it obvious that the Soviet Union was ahead in science and technology. The space race had begun. The National Defense Education Act of 1958 made federal funding available to capitalize on interest in supporting programs to develop talents. As has been typical in the United States, interest in educating gifted children to a high level has waned when there was prosperity and relative comfort among nations. However, when uncertainty appears on the international scene, plans to provide advanced and accelerated learning opportunities become a priority at the local, state, and national levels. During a crisis, gifted individuals are considered a valuable resource to be developed to the highest level. Decision-makers at all levels provided support for educational initiatives to offer challenging educational opportunities in mathematics and science to develop this precious resource to high levels following the launching of Sputnik I.

#### Number Two

The report entitled Education of the Gifted and Talented, known as the Marland Report was issued by the U.S. Office of Education in 1972 when Sidney P. Marland, Jr. was the U.S. Commissioner of Education. This report is significant in two respects. First, the report established the low-level of awareness or the high level of unawareness among educators about gifted children. Over half of the superintendents reported that there were no gifted children in their schools. Secondly, although the public generally has seen the intellectually gifted person as "the gifted" individual, the Marland Report established six categories of giftedness. These areas were (1) general intellectual ability, (2) specific academic ability, (3) creative or productive thinking, (4) leadership ability, (5) visual and performing arts, and (6) psychomotor ability. The only area of giftedness which has not continued in subsequent definitions is the last one, psychomotor ability. This report led to the Office of Gifted and Talented Education in 1972 and leadership in the development of awareness of the needs of children who are gifted and talented.

#### Number Three

The establishment of national and state organizations in gifted education has been very important in the development of support and advocacy for addressing the needs of children and youth who are gifted and talented. In 1954, The National Association for Gifted Children was started, and now has affiliates in most states. Another important organization advocating for gifted and talented children is the Council for Exceptional Children, which has The Association for the Gifted as one of its divisions. Parents and educators combine their efforts in these organizations to provide leadership at state and national levels to ensure that the needs of children who are gifted and talented are not left out in the development of policies and legislation. The establishment of these organizations has been critical in building support for addressing the needs of gifted and talented children. Leaders of these organizations have realized that it is important to "be in the room when decisions are made" and have worked with decisionmakers at all levels in order to build support through advocacy.

#### Number Four

The principles of differentiation were developed by the Curriculum Council of the National/State Leadership Institute on the Gifted and Talented in 1982 with Dr. Sandra Kaplan in the leadership role. The principles described the necessary components of curriculum which can be differentiated to address the needs of children and youth who are gifted and talented. The dissemination of the principles of differentiation has led to the recognition that the key to successfully teaching children who are gifted and talented depends on matching instruction to "need." For children who are able to learn at a faster pace and at a more complex level, the "need" is actually the strength or strengths. Some school districts have adopted district-wide policies of differentiation, requiring differentiation for all students to allow for continuous progress.

#### Number Five

Brain research has added new dimensions to the understanding of human potential and how that potential can be developed. Findings from the on-going research in neuroscience highlight the need to provide a stimulating environment for all children, including children who are gifted and talented, if they are to develop their potential to the highest levels possible. Research findings emphasize the critical nature of the early childhood period. The findings from research on neuroscience have strong messages for parents and educators and the roles they play in developing human potential to optimum levels. Providing challenging learning opportunities is key to the continuing development of intellectual potential. These research findings have and will continue to provide the rationale and strategies for ensuring that children, including children who are gifted and talented, will maximize their potential.

#### Number Six

The establishment of residential schools for high school students has occurred in several states during the last two decades. These schools have been important in providing opportunities for young people representing an entire state to come together to learn at challenging levels and to allow some of the very brightest students to make continuous progress. These schools have focused on mathematics and science, math, science, and the visual and performing arts. In 1980, North Carolina established the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics in Durham and several other states have opened residential schools since that time. The rationale behind residential schools recognizes that some students are ready for, and need, more advanced learning opportunities than others who are the same age. These schools provide evidence that "the least restrictive alternative" for many exceptional children may be the regular classroom; however, "the least restrictive alternative" for young people with advanced abilities or talents may be to learn

together in a special school with others who share their interests and who have similar abilities. While the regular classroom is the least restrictive alternative for many exceptional children, opportunities for children and youth who are gifted and talented to learn with others who share their interests and who are ready to learn at an accelerated pace and at more abstract levels may be critical for them to achieve at levels commensurable with their abilities and readiness to learn.

#### Number Seven

The Richardson Study and Dissemination Conferences were influential in the 1980s and continue to shape gifted education in the last decade of the century. The Richardson Study, funded by the Sid W. Richardson Foundation to examine gifted education, and directed by June Cox, examined services and programs that resulted in recommendations for gifted education. The publication of the study was followed with dissemination conferences. Grants were available from the Richardson Foundation to hold a statewide conference to share the recommendations. Key decision makers in a state were invited and the recommendations of the study became the points of discussion. Discussions at the Richardson Study Dissemination Conference stimulated valuable interest in addressing the needs of able learners, and this conference has served as a model for the annual Symposium on Kentucky's Children Who are Gifted and Talented. Bringing together decision makers from key organizations in education, business, and government has been essential in building support for addressing the needs of children and youth who are gifted and talented.

#### Number Eight

The Javits Gifted and Talented Students Act, passed by Congress in 1988, provided leadership in the field of gifted and talented education. The creation of the U.S. Office of Gifted and Talented Education meant that once again (the block grants of the 1980s eliminated the office) gifted and talented children have needs that must be addressed at a national level. The creation of the National Research Center for Gifted and Talented Children allowed for a research focus on gifted education. The third area of leadership made possible by the Javits Act was the funding of model projects to implement strategies and report results. The focus on gifted education at a national level has been very important in providing support to state education reform initiatives in the 1990s and in conducting research that has been critical in documenting areas of need for children who are gifted and talented as well as strategies that are effective in addressing those needs.

#### Number Nine

National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent was the second national report on the status of gifted education. This report, issued in 1993, has once again focused the attention of educators and the public on "the quiet crisis" in which the needs of gifted children and youth are either not addressed, or are met in a fragmented way. The report states that gifted children are

"Children and youth with outstanding talent, perform, or show the potential for performing at remarkable high-levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment."

The definition stresses that "Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor." The recommendations of National Excellence has provided a blueprint which states have used in expanding their definitions of children who are gifted and talented and in describing the services they should receive.

Number Ten

State initiatives to require services in multiple areas of giftedness have begun in the 1990s. The mandate is to identify children who are gifted and talented in intellectual ability, a specific academic ability, creativity, leadership, and/or the visual and performing arts. After students have been identified, the multiple services options are examined in order to match services to needs. Kentucky is one of the states which requires services in all five areas of giftedness. Doing so necessitates talking about services rather than "the gifted program" because the "onesize-fits-all" program cannot match the needs of the diverse population which is identified in the five areas.

As the new century arrives, the education of gifted and talented children and adolescents cannot be ignored. All children deserve quality educational opportunities to develop their potential; however, it is important to remember that all children are not identical and therefore, their academic and social emotional needs are not the same. The two national reports of this century have established definitions that address several categories of giftedness. National Excellence clearly states that children who are gifted and talented come from all backgrounds, thereby clarifying that educators have the responsibility for being talent scouts, identifying children who display talent at a higher level when compared with age mates. Moving beyond "the gifted program" to services for gifted children, services which match needs rather than a one-size-fits-all program that may not offer articulated services. Recognizing that the least restrictive alternative for many gifted children is very different than it is for other exceptional children. Leadership in the field of gifted and talented education must be provided as parents and educators work and learn together. Key decision makers at the local, state, and national levels must be informed and involved if gifted children are to make continuous progress. They must know that continuous progress will take gifted and talented children way beyond grade level. Leadership must continue to be provided through a national research center and a national office of gifted and talented education.

The year 2000 which has seemed so far away for a long time has arrived. Events, including reports, issues, areas of emphasis, and occurrences have shaped our views of gifted and talented children and youth and allowed a broadening of our understanding of children who are gifted and talented and how we can best develop their potential. Let's learn from key events of the 1990s and create a promising future for all children in the 21st Century!

**My view of the "Top 10" events that have influenced the field of gifted education during the past century**

Heansly, P. A. (1999). My view of the "Top 10" events that have influenced the field of gifted education during the past century. *Gifted Child Today Magazine*. 22(6), p. 33

As a teen becoming an adult in the 1950s, I can remember faithfully listening to the radio each Saturday for the Hit Parade-to hear those Top Ten songs that everyone was singing (well at least all those who were in the popular "know"). Some of the events I'm about to relate, as might be expected, may not be the ones you would have agreed upon as being on your Hit Parade list, or standing out in your repertoire, but that's all right because it has been a busy century, and, among all of us, we should be able to compose a fascinatingly rich Top 10 medley.

The first and second events on my list, though not in chronological order, would have to be the emergence of Renzulli's definition of giftedness, as presented in the 1978 Phi Delta Kappan (60, pp. 180-184), under the title of "What makes giftedness? Reexamining a definition" and its later ramifications for instruction and human learning. I've chosen these events from a self-oriented stance because of their impact on my own contributions to the field; the definition emerged just as I was entering the field, a latecomer from the field of genetics and child rearing to education and, specifically to gifted education. They have significantly impacted my own perspective regarding the phenomenon of giftedness.

Having just made in 1978 a major life transition-from busy motherhood with my youngest now entering nursery school, to reentry into graduate school and a Ph.D. program assigned to Dr. Bill Nash as my committee chair-I wasn't even sure I saw "gifted education" as the field of study most needing of my attention. However, Bill soon introduced me, as he did all his graduate students, to the world of people at the forefront of this field, Joe Renzulli among them. It wasn't long until I was convinced that this field could be a worthwhile effort in my life endeavors, and, that this definition and its implications for individual human development and for education would have lasting impact on the entire field of education. Giftedness was no longer an elitist commodity found among royalty and the human few. No longer was an extraordinary IQ just an occurrence; it was a phenomenon that had dimensions malleable in human development and through appropriate instruction-one that might have latent implications for my own children but certainly implications for my grandchildren.

With the publication of this 1978 article in the Phi Delta Kappan, Renzulli generated an almost endless set of variations on conceptions of giftedness as held by people in the field, while striking a common chord about giftedness as a construct. This definition recognized that while giftedness must reflect some extraordinary ability, it also put into perspective the manner in which individual outcome could be affected through varying degrees of creative abilities interwoven with specific gifted potential, and through varying degrees of the personal drive or commitment that it takes to develop one's extraordinary potential.

I believe the Three-Ring definition became a crystallizing moment for Renzulli, as it has formed the core of most of his succeeding work. I think it was also a crystallizing moment for the field as a whole, because it generated much dialogue about the nature of giftedness while initiating many specific and differing ideas about what might be nurtured when in order to help youth with gifted potential achieve that potential. Neither definition nor theory provided all the answers, but they appeared to offer a springboard for many different concrete possibilities for answering the questions. It led to concrete ways of understanding the complex nature of what giftedness might be and to concrete and specific plans of action for constructing curricula that would serve the intellectual, as well as creative needs of youth, with extraordinary potential. That is, it encompassed the effect of the environment and the effect of an individually differing potential for

guiding self-growth and development, and it gave concrete imagery to a somewhat abstract entity.

It also led to the three-phased approach to independent investigations used to foster development of individual giftedness in specific domains and performance areas indirectly through exploration based on interest, to be followed if needed by direct instruction in strategies for inquiry into the interest area, and fulfilled by opportunities for independent inquiry based on the student's choice of content. The independent focus on a content or problem-the choice of investigation style with the selection of a process and the strategies for pursuing the problem, leading the study to generate a product or outcome directed to an audience-reflects well real-life processes and has become the basis for experiential or project-oriented learning for a lifetime. Furthermore, it led to an instructional model which facilitates self-differentiation in learning, depending more on a personal agency oriented sense of the gifted individual, than on the passive-oriented notions of others, be they experts in the interest area or not, about what will work best for all individuals.

I chose this ramification of Renzulli's definition because it too has personal significance for my own interest in children's museums, adventures, and explorations as intrinsically differentiable curriculum, available directly to gifted children and their first educators their parents. To me, its significance lies in its power to self-teach individuals how to learn for a lifetime of intellectual, aesthetic, and personal growth. These effects do not always evolve out of the structured learning that has been confined to school buildings, but might actually become "the way" for the future.

The third "hit" on my list occurred much earlier and features a person as well as two notable events. In 1954, Ann Isaacs founded NAGC and, along with it, the professional journal for the organization, Gifted Child Quarterly. This new association arose from concerns of parents, teachers, and school administrators, who, along with Isaacs, felt deeply the black hole of nonacceptance for children who were different because of their precocious or intellectual abilities. Obviously, a creative and gifted individual in her own right, Isaacs' educational sequence reflected inadequate instructional resources and organized schooling for youth who didn't fit in an average scenario. Her postsecondary education was quite varied, having included periods at institutions ranging from the University of Chicago and Western Reserve University, to a BA in Psychology from University of California, a M.Ed. in counseling and guidance from Xavier University, and Ph.D. work at Ohio State University in counseling, guidance and school administration. Her authored contributions were passionate pleas for the support of creative children, and, although many of her pieces written with these children as targeted audience, they were moralistic and preachy about proper behaviors, yet they fiercely supported society's need to provide for the development of their giftedness lest these bright minds be lost to society.

For the next 20 years, her enthusiasm and determination guided the emergence of a concentrated effort in the field and generated a cadre of believers that gifted and creative children needed educational services and opportunities they were not receiving. This Renaissance woman was unbelievably productive at a time when gifted women were not necessarily viewed "as capable as" men and discrimination was rampant. The early movers and shakers of the field-John Gowan and E. Paul Torrance, along with Walter Barbe, Stanley Krippner, Joe Khatena, Barbara Pilon, Juliana Gensley, and others, became a part of this GCQ circle, even though the solidarity of the group eventually deteriorated.

After a somewhat unfriendly rejection from some of this core group at NAGC, Ann moved on to working with her newly formed organization, the National Association for Creative Children and Adults, where she could focus more clearly on the type of creativity she espoused and on creative adults whom she believed needed attention as well. Here, her flamboyant and "scholarly loose" style of thinking, writing, and doing found a better niche than with those in the field who needed to move on to more rigorously scientific studies of gifted youth and creativity@ Isaacs found a more

scholarly and professional approach to the questions of education and schooling and a more productive advocacy, or, at least a more negotiating stance.

Fourth and fifth significant events, in my view, achieved notoriety through a nationally generated response to a scientific and engineering achievement, one that would have far reaching consequences for gifted education-the Russian deployment of Sputnik in 1957 and the U.S. political response in the educational arena. The Sputnik event is of particular interest as we move into the new millennium, with NASA and space scientists engaged in exploring Jupiter, the Russian space station Mir having been abandoned, and an international space station sadly under-supported by the Russians. The ability for the U.S. to take leadership in space exploration as we near the year 2000 has been a direct outcome of the 1957 Sputnik-induced emphasis on improving science and math education for U.S. gifted youth.

Though educators and developmental psychologists interested in youth with extraordinarily positive manifestations of ability had been trying to capture the attention of politicians and school planners with regard to the sorry plight of underserved gifted, Sputnik spoke to those decision makers with a different voice. The Sputnik event in which Russian technology took the lead in extending human endeavor into outer space caused an uproar because political leaders of the U.S. realized that this country had been upstaged by a potential global adversary, and this did not bode at all well for the political and economic future of a country of Western-centric nationalists.

Perhaps, they rationalized, educators who had been berating an educational system that drastically failed to meet the instructional needs and develop the potential ability of our brightest youth, were correct after all. These educators had asserted that not only had the U.S. failed to prepare students well in the natural sciences, health fields, physics, mathematics, and engineering, but also that too few gifted students were being encouraged to continue on into advanced studies. This deficit would do serious damage for the future scientific and professional efforts of this nation.

The uproar led to the National Defense Education Act of 1958 and represented the first large-scale involvement by the federal government in the area of gifted education. Its goal was to upgrade instruction, not only because our military strength was at stake, but also our economic and political leadership in the world. The act provided funds to strengthen six components of American education, one of them being the identification of gifted children, even though that required overcoming rampant anti-intellectualism and egalitarianism. The act also set aside money to assist schools in establishing programs in Science, mathematics, and foreign languages, indicating where the emphasis in high-level education must be placed to build up our country's supply of high-level human resources. Abe Tannenbaum referred to this aftermath of Sputnik as a "total talent mobilization." Unfortunately, the Sputnik national sensitivity wore off after a few years with little political and financial support for continued efforts until a resurgence occurred in the mid-1970s.

My vote for a sixth significant event focuses on the 1972 Marland definition of gifted and talented, stemming from a next sequence in a series of legislative events that would speak to the need for the support of gifted education, underwritten with the necessary allocation of funding, supplemented by an official definition for what would be considered gifted and talented for those allocation purposes. This sequence began with the Marland Report of 1971, in which the Commissioner of Education, Sidney P Marland, submitted a report to Congress concluding that the Federal Government had provided virtually no services to meet the needs of gifted and talented students in the U.S. The report eventually led to the establishment with official status of the Office of Gifted and Talented in 1974, though fund allocation consistently dragged its feet in response to many members of the administration who believed that bright youngsters would make it on their own.

The Marland definition read: "Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who, by virtue of outstanding abilities, are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society." A familiar list of the six performance areas followed along with an estimate that three to five percent of the population fell under this definition.

The definition, while essential from an administrative point-of-view, had, I believe, both positive and negative outcomes. From a positive viewpoint, it served to direct the attention of school administrators, planners, and other educators to the gifted population, specifically directing them to a priority of providing special services for certain categories of human performance and endeavor, among them being children whose instructional and psychological needs were not currently being served. In a less positive way, however, the definition served to (a) direct almost the entire attention of service providers to identification procedures and objective measures in order to assure receipt of funding allocations; and (b) to confuse the field about the real nature of giftedness (that is, confound educational provisions differing between well-endowed schools and poverty-based schools, with what developing giftedness and gifted learners demands by way of instruction), thus distracting the attention of practitioners and even researchers for too long a period from the more critical task of how education and instruction must proceed in order to foster development of differing gifts of differing individuals at differing periods of their lives.

At that historical period, the Gifted and Talented Children Education Act of 1978 became law, passed by Congress due to efforts of Senators Jacob Javits; (R-NY), Robert Stafford (R-VT), and Representative Carl Purcell (R-MI). Under Title IXa, appropriations for fiscal year 1978 were \$3,780, for FY 1979 they were \$25,000,000, with an increase in authorization of \$5,000,000 per year until FY 1983 when authorization would reach \$50,000,000. Of the total appropriation, 25% would remain under the commissioner's discretionary funds and 75% would go to states if they applied. Of state funds, 90% would go to LEAs, and the remaining 10% were reserved for state administrative costs. If the appropriation level reached \$15,000,000, the program would revert to a state formula award with each state receiving an amount of money based on total school-age population. No state would receive less than \$50,000. This quite specific allocation of funds was remarkable in its scope, and its potential for signifying that gifted education must certainly be in our sights within education, if not necessarily the major priority. Most importantly, the Javits grant allocations have resulted in much research on teacher preparation and on program development, thus bringing the field closer to the task of appropriate instruction and nurturance of giftedness.

As a seventh top 10 hit, I would place an event that brought parental to the forefront of the field of gifted education. In the Winter 1979 issue of GCQ Kay Coffey, a NAGC Board member and heart of the parent component of that organization, announced the founding of The Association for Gifted and Talented Students, AGTS, for parents and other advocates of gifted education. It was to be independent of NAGC but would cooperate with it in its endeavors and pronouncements. She founded it in Louisiana as a tax-exempt organization, but it was designed to serve parents throughout the nation. Kay was an ardent advocate and continually kept the parent view in a prominent place at NAGC meetings and for gifted education in general. She occupied only a small space in the history of the organization, yet, as long as she was in NAGC, she made her view of parents' needs of gifted known and believed and acted upon them.

Since that time, NAGC has even seen the initiation of a Parent and Community division and has established a Parenting for High Potential magazine as an integral part of its areas of service and advocacy. Since 1977, The Gifted Child Today Magazine has had parents, as first educators of gifted youth, as its targeted audience. Parent groups in many states have taken the lead in establishing provisions for gifted youth when schools have not been so oriented. Kay Coffee, for me, qualifies as a member of the Top 10 Hits!

Eighth on my Hit Parade is the 1990 creation of the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented—the first federally funded research center on the education of gifted and talented students. Education Secretary, Laurdo Cavazos, announced the creation of this center funded with \$1.5 million from the Javits bill. It would be a center whose mission was to evaluate current methods of identifying gifted students, examine classroom practices, evaluate different teacher preparation programs, and study the progress of gifted students who were not served by special programs. Through a competitive process, direction of the Center was awarded to a consortium of institutions with Joe Renzulli operating it at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. The Javits bill received nearly \$ 10 million for FY 1990 and has had other funding in the years since. Approval of the Javits bill essentially put the federal government into the position of finally implementing the major contention of the Marland Report of 20 years earlier.

Out of this endeavor have come an extensive series of research projects and publications organized through the center but carried out at various institutions where major experts in the field reside. This research, and the resulting reports, have continued to make a significant contribution to the field of gifted education by making possible developmental and educational decisions made on the basis of sound, scientifically documented data rather than dependent upon personal experiences, intuition, and anecdotal evidence to support or negate practice. The center has been especially effective at organizing a related stream of projects and resources to enrich the increasing knowledge base in the field of gifted education, thus giving direction to the field. Ninth on my Hit Parade would be the work of many developmental psychologists in the field—Bloom, Csikszentmihalyi, Feldman, Horowitz and O'Brien, Janos and Robinson, Sternberg, Wallace and Gruber, and many others—but I will focus on that of Benjamin Bloom and his study of Developing Talent in Young People. His retrospective study of 120 unusually well-endowed and talented individuals was groundbreaking in its scope and its findings. This study, which explored and defined crucial stages in talent development, supported the finding that the amount of support and instruction children receive from their parents and teachers is central to the development of talent.

This finding is a significant piece in our understanding of the gifted phenomenon and its nurturance. Overall, developmental psychology has the informative power to take all of us in gifted education to the very heart of what must be provided if giftedness is to become actualized. Instruction, though a critical piece, is only one of the necessary ingredients. Though not to be prioritized as tenth on any list of significance in gifted education, the development of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children certainly needs to be categorized as one of the Top 10 events of the century for the field because of its accomplishment of bringing together a multitude of perspectives from around the globe regarding giftedness and its nurturance.

In 1975, Harry Passow visiting in London with Henry Collis of the United Kingdom, acting on creative impulses well steeped in the ideas of gifted education, set up the first pre-conference or meeting of people from all countries interested in promoting the cause for this special population. Henry Collis, recently deceased, was at that time the Head Teacher of an independent prep school for boys ages 5 to 13. Collis, along with Margaret Branch and Camilla Ruegg, established a teacher training college in London in the 1970s and set up a national association for gifted children in the UK. Collis and Passow became friends and essentially "hatched" a World Council, officially established in August, 1977. Now, more than 20 years later, this organization forms a network of educators, scholars, researchers, and parents from all over the world. The organization spawned additional affiliates: The Asia Pacific Federation, the Ibero-American Federation, as well as the European Council for High Ability.

Since that time, the World Council has evolved through the leadership of gifted scholars around the globe from a small intimate group, to a current roster of over 40 countries, and has conducted biennial conferences in London, San Francisco, Jerusalem, Montreal, Manila, Hamburg, Salt Lake City, Sydney, The Hague, Toronto, Hong Kong, Seattle, and, this year, in Istanbul.

Organization-wise, its headquarters moved from the Teacher's College at Columbia University-

N&N Topic 20 HO 3

<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?Did=000000047034474&Fmt=3&Deli=1&Mtd=1&Idx=6&Sid=1&RQT=309>

## Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

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New York, to the University of South Florida during Dorothy Sisk's years as Executive Secretary, to Toronto when Nora Maier was President, back to Purdue University under John Feldhusen's leadership, to the Connie Belin and Jacqueline Blank International Center at the University of Iowa with Nicholas Colangelo as the Executive Administrator, and currently to Northridge, CA, under Barbara Clark's presidency.

My own enthusiasm for this organization, as a piece of Midas gold for gifted children, comes from having attended six of the conferences, biennially renewing global friendships, and hearing wisdom and stimulating ideas from many different perspectives about giftedness as a phenomenon critical to civilization's progress. My most recent experience at the 13th Biennial Conference in Istanbul was richly rewarding, attended along with 300 people registered from some countries I had only known existed as points on vague world maps with changing country borders, and allowed me to get to know the wonderfully warmhearted, lovely people of Turkey and to steep in the history of an area that is the cradle of civilization. Meeting in such different places, and with so many different faces and voices, makes one realize that we in the U.S. have only begun to tap the significance of "being gifted!"

One could indubitably name many additional events for this Top 10 list, but the ones I have described here are those that (a) are most personally significant to me during my time in this century, and (b) seemed to be especially useful starting points for generating a Top 100 list.

# Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

## TOPIC 21 - RESEARCH

**KEY QUESTION:** What else should you consider?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Identify and interpret current research findings and recommendations that impact gifted education e.g. National Association for Gifted Child (NAGC) Program Standards. <http://www.nagc.org/webprek12.htm>

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- NAGC research findings
- program standards.

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- NAGC Program Standards (appendix)
- Topics for research and discussion (HO 1)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Review district gifted program standards (when available) in light of those profiled on NAGC Program Standards site. Summarize findings.
- Assign related topics for research and discussion (based on *Kidsource* web site). Use ERIC Digest as preliminary source or reference.
- Create data spreadsheet which compares/contrasts common or major topics discussed in various articles, digests, and/or research papers.
- Create draft program standards for school district, if none exist.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed summary of findings
- completed and/or presented research paper on assigned topic
- completed data spreadsheet
- completed draft program standards.

**RESOURCES:**

- <http://www.nagc.org/webprek12.htm>
- Topics for research and discussion  
<http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/pages/ed.gifted.html>
- District curriculum and/or program standards

## **Topics for research and discussion**

### **ADHD and Children Who Are Gifted**

Frequently, bright children have been referred to psychologists or pediatricians because they exhibited certain behaviors (e.g., restlessness, inattention, impulsivity, high activity level, day-dreaming) commonly associated with a diagnosis of ADHD. Almost all of these behaviors, however, might be found in bright, talented, creative, gifted children. Until now, little attention has been given to the similarities and differences between the two groups, thus raising the potential for misidentification in both areas-giftedness and ADHD. This digest provides specific differences between the two groups that will help parents and educators better understand and evaluate their children.

### **Career Planning for Gifted and Talented Youth**

Parents and teachers often assume that career planning for gifted students will take care of itself. However, evidence is mounting that youthful brilliance in one or more areas does not always translate into adult satisfaction and accomplishment in working life. Some factors that can contribute to problems with career planning are presented here, along with ways of preventing and intervening with career development problems. This digest outlines by age group what to watch for and the steps you can take to help your gifted child.

### **Gifted Children - Activity and Resource Calendar for Parents**

This great calendar provides a wealth of information, ideas, activities and resources for parents of gifted and talented children. Use it as a reference for articles, books, websites, mailing lists, associations and more.

### **Helping Adolescents Adjust to Giftedness**

Young gifted people between the ages of 11 and 15 frequently report a range of problems as a result of their abundant gifts: perfectionism, competitiveness, rejection from peers, and more. Caring adults can assist these young people to "own" and develop their talents by understanding and responding to adjustment challenges and coping strategies. This digest provides a good description of these challenges and provides specific coping strategies.

### **Joy and Loss: The Emotional Lives of Gifted Children**

As Ellen Winner explains in her outstanding book, *Gifted Children*, there is a myth that gifted children are better adjusted, more popular, and happier than average children. The challenging reality is that more frequently, nearly the opposite is true. For most gifted children, childhood is more pleasurable and more fulfilling because they derive joy from challenge and reward from work. At the same time, it is a childhood that is more painful, more isolated, and more stressful because they do not fit in with their peers and they set high expectations.

### **Nurturing Giftedness In Young Children**

With young gifted children, their uneven development may confuse and concern parents and educators and may mask the extent of their giftedness. This digest helps parents and

educators recognize and understand the early development of gifted children and helps the adults chose a program or school that is best for their child.

### **College Planning for Gifted and Talented Youth**

Gifted and talented students often have problems beyond those of most other students who consider college and career choices. A systematic, collaborative approach is needed whereby students learn that college planning is part of life career development. This digest begins with specific activities and approaches for students in junior high-school and concludes with a description of what colleges will be looking for as they evaluate gifted students.

### **Developing Learner Outcomes for Gifted Students**

Learner outcomes specify student behaviors we want at a particular developmental point. These outcomes provide the basis for creating worthwhile learning experiences, for setting appropriate expectations, and for assessing the extent of learning attained. This digest contains concrete suggestions for creating appropriate learner outcomes for gifted students and it contains a good example showing how outcome expectations could differ for gifted students.

### **Discovering Mathematical Talent**

The fate of mathematically talented students will be determined largely by the ability of their parents and educators to discover and nurture the special ability of the students. This digest shows that by discovering the mathematical talent of these students early and by using that knowledge to provide appropriate academic nurture, we have the greatest chance to help these individuals reach their gifted potential.

### **Dual Exceptionalities (Gifted and Learning Disabled)**

Gifted students with disabling conditions remain a major group of underserved and understimulated youth. This article provides parents and teachers with characteristics of gifted and/or learning disabled students to help identify those students with special needs. While the article is a bit 'academic' in its writing style, the lists it contains are insightful and useful.

### **Fostering Academic Creativity in Gifted Students**

Creative learning is a natural, healthy human process that occurs when people become curious and excited. Children prefer to learn in creative ways rather than just memorizing information provided by a teacher or parents and they can learn better and sometimes faster. This digest covers creative behavior in children and outlines what parents and teachers can do to foster creativity, for all types of students, not just gifted ones.

### **Helping Your Highly Gifted Child**

Most parents greet the discovery that their child is not merely gifted but highly or profoundly gifted with a combination of pride, excitement, and fear. They may set out to find experts or books to help them cope with raising such a child, only to find there are no real experts, only a couple of books, and very little understanding of extreme intellectual potential and how to develop it. This digest deals with some areas of concern and provides a few practical

suggestions based on the experience of other parents and the modest amount of research available.

### **Homeschooling Gifted Students: An Introductory Guide for Parents**

During the last 20 years, increasing numbers of families in the United States have chosen to educate their children at home or outside the conventional school environment. Current estimates range from 500,000 to 1.2 million students. Of that number, a significant percentage of families have chosen homeschooling as the educational option for their gifted children. There are many issues to explore when families consider homeschooling their children.

### **How Can I Help My Gifted Child Plan for College?**

Children who are "gifted" demonstrate a high performance capability in intellectual, creative, or artistic areas, leadership ability, or specific academic fields. This brochure discusses early steps parents and their gifted children can take to prepare for college and to ensure that the college experience is positive.

### **Identifying and Serving Recent Immigrant Children Who Are Gifted**

The challenge of identifying gifted children and providing them with appropriate educational services is particularly complex when they are recent immigrants to the United States. This digest describes these challenges and outlines specific strategies.

### **Know Your Legal Rights in Gifted Education**

Gifted preschool, elementary, and secondary school children have very limited protections under state and federal laws. By contrast, children and adults with disabilities have, under federal statute and in turn under state law accepting federal provisions, comprehensive protections in the following areas not yet applicable to the gifted: identification for screening and program admission or eligibility purposes, educational or other institutional and related services, employment policies and practices, architectural barriers in and about public buildings and transportation facilities, and other civil rights protections.

### **Leadership Development and Gifted Students**

The role of parents and educators is critical in assisting with the development of leadership attitudes and skills in gifted youth. Leadership has been designated a talent area in federal and state definitions of gifted students who require differentiated programs, yet it remains the least discussed of the curricular areas for these students in the literature, and it is not well defined. This digest provides a better understanding of how leadership qualities can be developed in gifted students.

### **Nurturing Social-Emotional Development Of Gifted Children**

Gifted children can have social- emotional developmental problems arising from their characteristic strengths. This article shows how these problems are associated with their strengths and it provides ways that parents and teachers can prevent or minimize these problems.

### **Personal Computers Help Gifted Students Work Smart**

Gifted and talented students in most schools now have access to computers in their classrooms, and an increasingly large percentage of these students have home computers. Educators, business and industry, the government, and the general public believe our most able students must be computer literate for our nation to be competitive in the next generation. Only recently, with the gulf between promises and achievements widening, have voices of concern been raised.

### **Providing Curriculum Alternatives To Motivate Gifted Students**

How to get the best performance from every student is a challenging task, especially in classrooms where there are many different levels of ability. This digest presents two strategies to help highly able students get more out of school. Teachers may find that the following strategies enable them to challenge and motivate not only gifted students, but also other students who have talents and abilities in specific areas. Parents will find these suggestions helpful when they work with their child's teacher.

### **Should Gifted Students Be Grade-Advanced?**

Keeping gifted students challenged and learning to their capacity can require changes in their regular school programs. This digest describes a wide variety of options including many forms of pull-out programs offering educational enrichment, honors classes, after school and summer programs featuring special course work, and mentor programs in which children are matched with professionals in the community for special learning experiences.

### **Supporting Gifted Education through Advocacy**

If you are a parent of a gifted child who would like to advocate for special programs within your school or district for gifted children, then this article will provide you with ideas for how to work 'within-the-system'. The article starts by describing how and why advocacy activities for gifted students should be different than for minority or disabled students. It then provides specific steps to follow in order to achieve long-term results.

### **Underachieving Gifted Students**

There is perhaps no situation more frustrating for parents or teachers than living or working with children who do not perform as well academically as their potential indicates they can. Yet, at what point does underachievement end and achievement begin? This digest discusses the these issues and provides specific suggestions and coping strategies for both parents and educators.

### **Blending Gifted Education and School Reform**

There needs to be a process for assuring that the unique needs of students who are gifted are addressed within the context of the current educational system. This digest includes a section on designing strategies for implementation of programs for gifted students and is a good reference for both parents and educators.

### **Conducting A Literature Review**

The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) outlines how to access major databases and resources for education, gifted and exceptional student information.

### **Differentiating Curriculum for Gifted Students**

Students who are gifted and talented are found in full-time self-contained classrooms, magnet schools, pull-out programs, resource rooms, regular classrooms, and every combination of these settings. No matter where they obtain their education, they need an appropriately differentiated curriculum designed to address their individual characteristics, needs, abilities, and interests.

### **Differentiating Instruction For Advanced Learners In the Mixed-Ability Middle School Classroom**

A particular challenge for middle school teachers is being able to differentiate or adapt instruction to respond to the diverse student needs found in inclusive, mixed-ability classrooms. This digest provides an overview of some key principles for differentiating instruction, with an emphasis on the learning needs of academically advanced learners.

### **Educating Exceptional Children**

They are the more than 4.5 million children and youth in this country who have physical, mental, or behavioral handicaps. Ranging in age from birth to 21, these children and youth with exceptionalities require the assistance of special educators in order to benefit from education. This digest provides a good overview of key issues, trends and programs for exceptional children.

### **Gifted But Learning Disabled: A Puzzling Paradox**

For many people, the terms learning disabilities and giftedness are at opposite ends of a learning continuum. In some states, because of funding regulations, a student may be identified and assisted with either learning disabilities or giftedness, but not both. Children who are both gifted and learning disabled exhibit remarkable talents or strengths in some areas and disabling weaknesses in others. This digest provides insights and strategies for educating children who are both gifted and learning disabled.

### **Giftedness and the Gifted: What's It All About?**

Using a broad definition of giftedness, a school system could expect to identify 10% to 15% or more of its student population as gifted and talented. This digest helps parents and educators understand the definition of gifted and how to recognize gifted children.

### **Helping Gifted Students With Stress Management**

Many gifted youngsters have a heightened sensitivity to their surroundings, to events, to ideas, and to expectations. Some experience their own high expectations for achievement as a relentless pressure to excel. Constant striving to live up to self-expectations--or those of others-- to be first, best, or both can be very stressful. This digest describes how a gifted child

can experience stress and it provides coping strategies for both parents and students. It also provides information to help parents tell if their child is experiencing burnout.

### **How Parents Can Support Gifted Children**

The key to raising gifted children is respect: respect for their uniqueness, respect for their opinions and ideas and respect for their dreams. Gifted children need parents who are responsive and flexible, who will go to bat for them when they are too young to do so for themselves. At home, children need to know that their uniqueness is cherished and that they are appreciated as persons just for being themselves. This digest helps parents understand their unique roll in raising gifted children and it contains a good list of indicators to help parents recognize giftedness in their children.

### **How To Provide Full-Time Services on a Part Time Budget**

There is a trend in many schools to eliminate gifted education programs in the belief that all students are best served in heterogeneous learning environments. This article challenges this trend and supports the benefits of keeping gifted students together in their areas of greatest strength for at least part of the school day. This practice of cluster grouping represents a way to make sure gifted students continue to receive a quality education at the same time as schools work to improve learning opportunities for all students.

### **Meeting the Needs of Gifted and Talented Minority Language Students**

Providing appropriate gifted and talented programs for students from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds is a challenge that many school districts face. This digest explores the controversy surrounding the under representation of minority language students in gifted and talented programs and makes recommendations for more suitable assessment techniques and program models.

### **Meeting the Needs of Able Learners through Flexible Pacing**

Flexible pacing includes any program in which students are taught material that is appropriately challenging for their ability and allows them to move forward in the curriculum as they master content and skills. For able or gifted learners, flexible pacing generally means some form of acceleration, accomplished by moving the student up to advanced content or by moving advanced content down to the student. With flexible pacing all students can progress through school at a pace that provides a steady challenge without crippling frustration or unreasonable pressure.

### **Teaching English to Gifted Students**

This Digest reviews the literature on the subject of teaching English to gifted students, examining how to identify students who are gifted in the areas of English and language arts, outlining some principles for developing effective programs in English and language arts for the gifted, and suggesting possible methods of evaluating gifted students and programs.

### **Teaching Mathematics to Gifted Students in a Mixed-Ability Classroom**

If your child is mathematically gifted, then this article will provide you with strategies for how your school can meet the special needs of your child. While this article is written for the educational professional, parents will find it useful when talking with their child's teacher.

### **Challenging Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom**

Our gifted and talented population must have a full service education if we expect these students to thrive in the manner in which they are capable. This is a good overview digest of the challenges faced in educating gifted students in the regular classroom.

### **Developing Programs for Students of High Ability**

Educators need to understand the components of an effective educational program for the different needs and abilities of high ability or gifted students. This digest describes each of these components and is written specifically for the educator who is designing these programs.

### **Gifted Learners and the Middle School: Problem or Promise?**

Historically, tension has existed between gifted education and middle school education, leaving some advocates of each educational practice suspicious of the other, and leaving middle school students who are advanced in one or more dimensions of learning in a sort of educational no-man's-land. This digest discusses this dilemma from the educator's perspective.

### **Guiding the Gifted Reader**

When a child is a gifted reader, how do you offer challenging reading materials? How do you guide their reading, and how do you know what books to recommend to them or their parents? Another relevant concern is how to develop programs that use literature in ways that are the most helpful to gifted students and make the most effective use of their abilities. In programs for gifted students it is important to go beyond a basic response to the need for more literature in the curriculum. This article addresses these concerns, and will help parents and educators understand and guide the gifted reader.

### **Professional Training for Teachers of the Gifted and Talented**

This Digest examines the roles of teachers of the gifted and talented, the roles of regular classroom teachers, and ways they work together. It also discusses necessary qualifications, ways to locate programs, and career opportunities in this field.

# Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

## TOPIC 22 – PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

**KEY QUESTION:** What else should you consider?

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Exhibit an understanding of the procedural safeguards for students who are gifted.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- procedural safeguards for gifted students

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- Procedural Safeguards At A Glance (Nichcy) (HO 1)
- ERIC #E 541: Know Your Legal Rights in Gifted Education. (HO 2)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Review elements of the procedural safeguards, as outlined in the new language of IDEA and relate to those district practices and procedures currently in place. Summarize findings.
- Review Florida's *Summary of Procedural Safeguards for Students Who Are Gifted* and or ERIC Digest # E541. Summarize findings.
- Conduct a "round-robin" discussion on the elements of the procedural safeguards vis-à-vis information in ERIC Digest.
- Role play an eligibility staffing where parent requests explanation of Florida's procedural safeguards.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed summary of findings
- review of salient points from suggested readings
- active participation in round robin discussion
- participation in role play opportunities.

**RESOURCES:**

- Nichcy's Procedural safeguards at a glance  
<http://www.nichcy.org/Trainpkg/traintxt/10txt.htm> - glance
- ERIC Digest #E541 <http://ericec.org/digests/e541.html>
- Florida's Summary of Procedural Safeguards for Students Who Are Gifted <http://www.firn.edu/doe/bin00014/pdf/giftgard.pdf>

## Procedural Safeguards at a Glance

### Overview of Procedural Safeguards

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act includes an entire section entitled "Procedural Safeguards." These safeguards are designed to protect the rights of parents and their child with a disability, as well as, give families and schools a mechanism for resolving disputes.

Procedural safeguards under the prior legislation include:

- the right of parents to inspect and review all of their child's educational records;
- the right of parents to obtain an independent educational evaluation (IEE) of their child;
- the right to written prior notice on matters regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of their child, or the provision of FAPE to their child;
- the right to request a due process hearing on these matters, which must be conducted by an impartial hearing officer;
- the right to appeal the initial hearing decision to the State Education Agency (SEA) if the SEA did not conduct the hearing;
- the right of the child to remain in his or her current educational placement, unless the parent and the agency agree otherwise, while administrative or judicial proceedings are pending (this provision has come to be known as the "stay-put" provision);
- the right to bring civil action in an appropriate State or Federal court to appeal a final hearing decision;
- the right of the parent to request reasonable attorney's fees from a court for actions or proceedings brought under IDEA (under certain circumstances);
- the right of parents to give or refuse consent before their child is initially evaluated or placed in a special education program for the first time.

Many of these procedural safeguards remain unchanged. Some have been amended, and some are new, as described below.

### Areas of Change

Procedural safeguards are a critical area of the law, for these ensure that the rights of parents and children are protected. IDEA 97 makes the following changes to the procedural safeguards section.

- Rather than always sending a detailed description of the procedural safeguards available to parents under the law, public agencies may now, in certain, well specified instances, merely provide to parents, as part of written prior notice, a statement that the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the procedural safeguards and indicate where parents might obtain assistance in understanding these safeguards. In other specific instances, the public agency must send parents a copy of a detailed description of the procedural safeguards.
  - Parents must now notify the public agency when they intend to remove their child from the public school and place the child in a private school at public expense.
  - Parents must now notify the SEA or the LEA, as the case may be, when they intend to file a due process complaint.
  - States must now have a voluntary mediation process in place, as a means of resolving disputes between LEAs and parents of children with disabilities.
  - Specific requirements have been added to the law regarding the disciplining of children with disabilities. Under certain circumstances, such as the child bringing a weapon to school or a school function, the child may be removed from his or her current educational placement and placed in an interim alternative educational setting or suspended or expelled from school.
  - Attorneys' fees may, under certain circumstances, be reduced or denied. Among the circumstances is when an attorney representing the parent did not provide the school district with the appropriate information in the due process complaint in accordance with IDEA. Attorneys' fees may not be awarded relating to any meeting of the IEP Team unless the meeting is called as a result of a due process hearing or judicial action, or, at the discretion of the State, for a mediation that is conducted prior to the filing of a due process complaint.
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### Relevance of Training on Procedural Safeguards

Procedural safeguards are an essential part of the law, and all training participants need to have a thorough and accurate grasp of what the law requires. Some of the procedural safeguards have been amended, and it will be important to highlight the ways in which past requirements have changed. In addition, new safeguards have been added. Accordingly, this module reviews the requirements for procedural safeguards that the IDEA 97 has changed and added. Procedural safeguards that have not changed are not discussed.

## **Know Your Legal Rights in Gifted Education**

Karnes, F. A. & Marquardt, R. (1997). *Know Your Legal Rights in Gifted Education*. The ERIC Clearing house on Disabilities and Gifted Education. Arlington, VA: ERIC EC Digest #E541. Retrieved from <http://ericec.org/digest/e541.html>

Gifted preschool, elementary, and secondary school children have very limited protections under state and federal laws. By contrast, children and adults with disabilities have, under federal statute and in turn under state law accepting federal provisions, comprehensive protections in the following areas not yet applicable to the gifted: identification for screening and program admission or eligibility purposes, educational or other institutional and related services, employment policies and practices, architectural barriers in and about public buildings and transportation facilities, and other civil rights protections.

Parents, educators, and other concerned adults involved with gifted children should know the legal framework in which the education and related services are set forth. The Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Act of 1994 was not established by Congress to protect the legal rights gifted children, but rather to provide for model programs and projects. In contrast, the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1990 does give extensive legal rights to persons with disabilities.

Without a federal law to protect the legal rights of gifted children, the responsibility for such mandates rests with the states. Approximately 30 states have a mandate to serve gifted children, while the remaining ones have permissive legislation (Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted, 1994). The National Association for Gifted Children has written a position paper supporting the concept that each state should mandate by law educational opportunities for gifted children.

Advocates for these students must request from state and local officials the appropriate statutes and regulations for their files for quick and authentic references. State law usually defines the types of gifted children who must or may be served with state funds, and the educational provisions allowable. In a few states, the state boards of education enacted a state definition and the kinds and types of services to be provided with state revenues. Usually, the function of this body is to approve the rules and regulations or standards written by the state department of education based on the implementation of the law passed by the legislature.

In addition, the local, county, or parish school board may have passed specific implementations within its jurisdiction. To assure services to all eligible students and to maximize the probability that a dispute will be resolved productively, there are channels to follow: negotiation, mediation, due process, and court cases (Karnes & Marquardt, 1993). Parents of gifted children have in personal success stories documented these processes with a variety of educational issues (Karnes & Marquardt, 1991).

### **Negotiation**

When disputes arise within a school district over screening and identification, programming options, or other areas, the parties involved should know the steps to resolve an issue within that jurisdiction. Typically, the negotiation begins at the level at which the dispute arose. An issue on screening and identification is usually within the job description of the person responsible for assessment and testing. For classroom procedures and curriculum decisions, the teacher and principal are the appropriate parties

with whom to discuss the concern. Within most districts, the next level for seeking a solution to an issue is the superintendent, then the board of education.

For person(s) who are dissatisfied and need to resolve a dispute, there are several proven practices that should be followed:

- Accurate records must be maintained at each level. Meetings and decisions or lack thereof must be documented via written correspondence.
- Be informed about local and state rules, regulations, and laws, and do not depend on hearsay.
- Policies and procedures for the exact route for resolving an issue at this level can be found in the minutes of the local school board or in a district handbook.
- Keep detailed records because some issues may take a long time to resolve.
- If an agreement cannot be reached at the local district level, then mediation may be the next step.

### **Mediation**

The right to mediation through state statute and/or state board of education policy is available to those involved with gifted education in approximately 10 states (Karnes & Marquardt, 1991). Mediation provides an avenue to resolve an issue in an informal, amicable manner with the guidance of a trained mediator; it should involve a minimum of time, financial support, and stress. The goal of mediation is to produce a written formal document, signed by all parties, that settles the issue. The mediator is key to the process and is usually appointed by the state department of education or another state agency. He/she must have excellent interpersonal skills and communication techniques. High-level writing skills are necessary to record each step needed in the remedy. The selection and training of mediators, procedures for the meeting, and examples of poorly and well-written mediation agreements are described by Karnes and Marquardt (1991). When mediation is not a state provision or when an agreement cannot be reached, procedural due process is usually the next step.

### **Due Process**

It is estimated that 28 states allow procedural due process for gifted children under the provisions of laws or regulations in special education applied to or specified for children with disabilities or under general provision (Coleman, Gallagher, & Foster, 1994).

Due process is very different from mediation. The costs of time, money, and emotional stress are greater. All decisions are the responsibility of the hearing officer. The report is written solely by the person conducting the hearing, and all aspects of the findings must be followed unless one of the parties appeals to the next highest level. The most common point of appeal is the chief state school officer or a person designated within the department of education.

The provisions for due process pertaining to gifted children vary from state to state. Variations appear in the level of the initial hearing, the selection and training of the hearing officers, jurisdiction, and the route of appeal. In the analysis of due process across states, there are also some shared common points: written prior notice to both parties about the time and date of the hearing, provisions for electronic or written transcripts of the hearing, parental choice about whether the hearing is open or closed, allowing the student in question to attend, opportunity for attorneys to be in attendance, and acceptance of expert witnesses for both sides to give testimony. After careful analysis of the due process procedures in all states and noting some irregularity, Karnes and Marquardt (1991) offered a model that avoids a conflict of interest in the process.

### **Court Cases**

Unfortunately, when conflicts cannot be resolved through negotiation, mediation, or due process, the next step is the courts, either state or federal, depending on the focus of the issue. The authors do not advocate going to court with issues in gifted education because resolutions at lower levels are more practical and efficient. Protracted court can be very costly, emotionally wrenching, and adversarial.

In the analysis of court cases, Karnes and Marquardt (1991) found that the issues fall into several categories such as educational opportunities, school policies, tort liability, divorce, etc. Early entrance to public school at different levels, admission to gifted programs, curriculum modification, and issues of race and gender are the general issues embodied in the category of educational opportunities (Marquardt & Karnes, 1989). School policy conflicts include busing, teacher seniority, transfer, and certification. The latter have been increasingly a matter for the courts to decide (Karnes & Marquardt, 1995). Tort liability issues involve accidents in the school and in summer residential programs for gifted children. The issues of custody and payments for education are involved in divorce cases. In a case still pending, the idea of fraud and misrepresentation was raised in what had been promised as gifted education and the delivery of services. This could be a recurring issue.

For certain types of gifted youth, there are protections under federal law. The Office for Civil Rights in the United States Department of Education has the responsibility to protect the educational rights of students in programs or activities receiving federal support. Equal opportunities to participate must be offered to children and youth regardless of age, disability, gender, national origin, race, or color. A review of the letters of findings from 1985-1991 in response to complaints revealed 48 rulings involving gifted and talented students. The majority of the rulings focused on African-American students, although other areas including disabilities and students of various native origins were found (Marquardt & Karnes, 1994).

The Legal Issues Network (LIN) was developed at the University of Southern Mississippi to help advocates of gifted children and others. All state organizations in gifted education have been invited to participate in LIN by developing a committee to examine state laws, rules, and regulations; due process hearings; and court cases pertaining to gifted children. The LIN also provides a newsletter to the state organizations.

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# Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

## TOPIC 23 - ADVOCACY

**KEY QUESTION:** What else should you consider?

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Discuss the role of the parent, teacher, and student in the advocacy process.
- Discuss the need for and benefits of parent involvement in the delivery of gifted program services.

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

- role of parent in advocacy
- role of teacher in advocacy
- role of student in advocacy
- need for parent involvement
- benefits of parent involvement

**RECOMMENDED READING ASSIGNMENT:**

- ERIC Digest #E494: *Supporting Gifted Education Through Advocacy* (HO 1)
- Gifted Advocacy Resource Sheet  
<http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/advocacy.htm> (HO 2)

**LEARNING OPTIONS - ACTIVITIES:**

- Outline the four pitfalls often associated with gifted advocacy (as outlined in the ERIC Digest *Supporting Gifted Education Through Advocacy*). Discuss implications and brainstorm ways to avoid pitfalls.
- Establish several work groups and assign each the task of creating a flow chart or graphic representation of the major steps involved in establishing and maintaining a successful parent advocacy group.
- Use Hogies Gifted web site *Gifted Advocacy*\_resource sheet to assign readings aimed at providing further information on parent, teacher, and/or student role in the advocacy process. Summarize findings and share information with group in a panel discussion format.

**EVIDENCE OF MASTERY:**

- completed outline and active participation in brainstorming activity
- completed flow chart or graphic representation and active participation in group assignment
- completed summary of readings and participation in panel discussions.

**RESOURCES:**

- ERIC Digest #E494 <http://ericec.org/digests/darchives/e494.html>
- Gifted Advocacy Resource Sheet  
<http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/advocacy.htm>

## Supporting Gifted Education Through Advocacy

Berger, S. (1990). *Supporting Gifted Education Through Advocacy*. Arlington, VA: The ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education. ERIC EC Digest #E494. Retrieved from <http://ericec.org/digests/darchives/e494.html>

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Effective nurturing of giftedness in children and adolescents requires a cooperative partnership between home and school, one that is characterized by mutual respect and an ongoing sharing of ideas and observations about the children involved. To accomplish this partnership, parents and educators must know something about giftedness, understand the children's needs, and understand some basic principles of advocacy.

Parents and educators should understand how to be effective advocates because recognition that all gifted children require programs specifically tailored to their unique learning requirements requires responsible action. *Your Gifted Child* (1989) provides practical suggestions on individual advocacy. If the problem involves many children, such as might be the case when there is a need for program development or expansion, a unified group voicing shared concerns is far more effective than the complaints of one or two people. Advocacy groups also provide mutual support and share problem-solving strategies.

Effective group advocacy requires individuals to be knowledgeable, organize, define goals and objectives, understand the organization and structure of the local school system, use existing local and state systems, be committed, and be persistent and patient. Joining or establishing a parent group is a good place to start. Investigate groups such as your local Parent Teacher Association to find out whether or not there are others who share your concerns. Contact your State Department of Education Coordinator for Gifted Programs and ask how to get in touch with your state advocacy group.

Some cautionary advice is also in order for individuals concerned with becoming effective advocates. Patricia Bruce Mitchell provides a sensible approach to group advocacy in the following excerpt from *An Advocate's Guide to Building Support for Gifted and Talented Education*.

### **Understanding the Process and Avoiding the Pitfalls**

The term advocate originates from the Latin word for legal counselor. It means one who pleads in favor of, supports by argument, defends or vindicates. Thus, we consciously (and sometimes unconsciously) become advocates of the things we truly believe in and want to see develop and improve.

To best explain the concept of advocacy, we will begin with some of the wrong approaches, then move to a suggested process for using your drive and abilities to achieve success as an advocate.

**Pitfall #1: Using an Adversarial Rather than a Persuasive Approach**

There is a tendency for us to model our behavior after the advocates for the rights of minorities and students with handicaps. They were successful, so we feel that if we do the same thing we will also reap big rewards for the children we represent.

Unfortunately this line of reasoning will not work. Those other advocates were very adept in various pressure tactics, but these tactics will not work as well for advocates of the gifted for three reasons:

The cause is different. The basic rights of children with handicaps and children from minority backgrounds were violated when they were systematically segregated from others. This inequity created a basis for guilt among those responsible for the segregation. Guilt makes us more responsive to pressure tactics. Unfortunately, few people feel guilty about doing something extra for children who have outstanding abilities, and it cannot be contended that gifted and talented children are being denied access to an education. Even though they may be bored and unhappy, they are still in school.

Times have changed. Everyone has learned to be more assertive as pressure tactics have become a part of everyday interactions. Thus, pressure no longer provides the high visibility for a cause that it once did.

We are wiser. We have learned a lot from the 1960s and 1970s. Legal proceedings can take years to complete. Even when the cause has been won, or a mandate incorporated into law, it will be a long time before state and local systems can implement the letter, much less the spirit, of the ruling. We are finally realizing that change is not an event; it is an evolutionary process.

In summary, "winning through intimidation" may work beautifully with hotel clerks who lose confirmed reservations, but it frequently backfires when trying to apply it to decision makers. The better approach would be to model yourself after a good salesperson. It may not be as inspiring as the "march into battle" adversarial approach, but it is more likely to be effective.

**Pitfall #2: Assuming That People In Administrative and Political Positions Are Not Too Bright or Not Very Knowledgeable--or Both**

It is amazing to see advocates in action who are displaying obvious contempt for the legislators, board members, or administrators with whom they are dealing. Perhaps this occurs because of a disrespect for politicians or because the advocates feel that their superior knowledge of the subject at hand puts them in a superior position. Such attitudes and actions are destructive to any cause. They are particularly deadly if the advocate is speaking on behalf of the gifted. Even the words gifted, talented, or exceptionally able evoke fear of elitism.

### **Pitfall # 3: Being Impatient**

It is tough to be patient when you see children whose abilities need attention and development right now. But patience in advocacy for gifted and talented students is more than a virtue, it is a requirement. Good program development takes time.

### **Pitfall #4: Being Human**

Perhaps the toughest challenge you will face as an advocate for students who are gifted and talented will not be to testify before a legislative committee but to manage to get a group of fellow advocates to work together. Cooperative advocacy is essential, but advocates are humans who may not feel that they have been given adequate input into or control over an advocacy effort such as seeking school board approval for a program. Such feelings may lead to undermining group efforts. It will take a chorus of committed persons to get the support needed for top-quality programs for every gifted and talented child. Getting that chorus together will require a lot of effort and selflessness so that no one voice rises above the others.

### **Channeling Your Energies in the Right Direction Through Systematic Advocacy**

Now that you have thought about what not to do, let us look at a process that can make your efforts more systematic and more successful. The process consists of four basic phases summarized here. For more detailed information and a thorough discussion of each phase, consult *An Advocate's Guide to Building Support for Gifted and Talented Education* (Mitchell, 1981).

**Needs Assessment.** Find out what is currently going on for gifted and talented students in your district, and then determine what should happen. The discrepancy between the two defines what your needs are. The next step is to make a "political" assessment: Find out who is supportive, who is undecided about improving programs for gifted and talented children, and what they will accept. A thorough assessment takes a lot of time, but it will pay much greater dividends than any other time investment.

**Planning.** Map out what you want to happen, how you will present your request, and how you will get the votes needed for approval. The plan should provide enough detail so that everyone understands what is to be done, who is responsible, and how and when it will be accomplished.

**Contact.** Present your request to the decision makers whose approval is essential. There are many ways that you can make informal and formal contact with decision makers and communicate your concerns for gifted and talented children. Lay the groundwork by finding ways to make contact in informal settings. Use informal contacts such as social functions or student awards ceremonies as a way to build support throughout the year, but particularly in the months preceding a formal request. Making a presentation or writing a letter to a board of education, the legislature, or one of their committees are examples of formal contact. Extensive preparation and rehearsal are essential.

Follow-up and Evaluation. Conduct a "postmortem" on your effects to determine what to do and what not to do next time. This phase usually merges into the needs assessment of the next advocacy effort, so the process is a continuous cycle.

It takes a lot of stamina to give your best energy and ideas to all four phases. The temptation is to focus on the contact, with some quick planning just before but with little or no needs assessment or follow-up. Resist the temptation. It is essential to carry out the needed activities in all four phases.

### **Establishing and Maintaining a Successful Parent Advocacy Group**

If you want your school district to start or expand a program for gifted students, organization is the key to effective advocacy. The following guidelines, distilled from resources listed at the end of this article, may be helpful:

Focus on a mission and sense of purpose. Your organization must be clear about its long-term goals and objectives and be able to describe them clearly to others. "Helping gifted children" sounds good, but is far too broad to hold your group together when you face the inevitable constraints and problems.

Pick a place and call a meeting of not only interested parents, but also business leaders, and school professionals. At some future time, they might be your strongest allies, since they are concerned about the quality of local education, the need for differentiated education, and the components of effective programs. Remember, not all programs for gifted students are effective. Decide on a name for the group, bearing in mind that the dispute over using the word gifted can take minutes, hours, or months to resolve. Leave at least a half hour for questions and comments. People need to feel involved!

Establish your steering committee. If, at the end of the first meeting, you have five committed people, you have achieved success. Decide what you want to accomplish and the frequency of meetings. Most boards meet at least once a month, and the members speak to one another frequently between meetings.

Contact your state advocacy group. Ask whether they have a constitution and by-laws and whether a ready-made network exists in your state. If so, affiliation may be beneficial.

Adopt a constitution that spells out the goals of the organization and the mechanics of its operation. Get sample copies of by-laws from other groups, and design your own to fit local conditions. Keep them simple. Aims and purposes should be listed in Articles of Organization. These can include, for example, "to provide information and to be generally helpful to parents of gifted children; to educate the public and to promote understanding in the community of the educational needs of gifted children; to act as a center for the exchange of ideas with other groups interested in education for the gifted; and to cooperate with such organizations in promoting educational opportunities for gifted children." Goals should be accompanied by measurable objectives and should answer the question, "What do I want to happen?"

In addition to by-laws, you will need written policies and procedures for conducting group business, descriptions of the purposes of all standing committees, and job descriptions for all positions. Agree on specific services your group can offer the community and how those services might be provided. For example, you might agree to inform parents on meeting the social and emotional needs of gifted children by identifying a speaker and holding a public meeting. Be sure to consider any negative consequences. One group placed a meeting notice in the local newspaper and later discovered that they had created a groundswell both for and against their goals and objectives.

Identify and respect the group that holds the power. School board members and state legislators are busy people who may be neutral or supportive of the idea of special programs for gifted but simply not know enough about the subject. Initial contacts should be used to provide information on student needs in your district. Your message should be direct and concise, and it should answer specific questions that the decision-maker wants answered. Inform yourself on your district's budget cycle. Distant goals require at least two years of advance planning.

Allow professionals to develop the program. Be careful to remain in your role as advocate. Your job is to help establish and maintain a system so that they can work more effectively in their roles as administrators, curriculum specialists, and teachers. One well-established parent group, with the support of curriculum specialists, used its resources to design and conduct a county-wide secondary school needs assessment.

The information was given to school officials along with a written request that the district assign a parent/student/professional task force to develop a program. The task force studied the parent report, investigated possible ways to meet the needs of gifted adolescents, and eventually submitted a report to the school board. This cooperative venture resulted in a pilot program several years later. By the time the pilot was put in place, everyone - parents, students, teachers, administrators - felt responsible for its ultimate success.

Conduct short- and long-term evaluation of the advocacy process. Your organization can strengthen and grow if it evaluates everything it does in terms of goals and objectives, and then acts on the results.

Provide reinforcement for group members. Successful advocacy groups for gifted children, like most organizations, function primarily with volunteer help. Praise and recognition for volunteers is essential.

Be an informed advocate. A healthy advocacy organization grows and changes with the evolution of what is learned about gifted children, their special needs, and effective political process. To maintain credibility and assist community members, an organization should be informed about national, state, and regional trends in gifted education, including operational definitions of the term gifted. The organization also

must establish informal or formal relationships with local, state, and national levels of government and other organizations. Learn to work cooperatively with consultants, legislators, state education groups, and other advocacy groups both within the state and beyond. Effective advocacy can be boiled down to positive use of accurate information by a large number of people.

Enjoy the people you will meet, the friends you will make, and the satisfaction derived from your efforts on behalf of gifted children.

### **Resources**

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This document has been retired from the active collection  
of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education.  
It contains references or resources that may no longer be valid or up to date.

## Gifted Advocacy

*"If our children do not get the opportunity to learn all they are able to learn, it is because not enough people insist on appropriate education for them. As parents we must organize to become a respected and sizable force which can make a difference."* Gina Ginsberg Riggs, "A Call for Parent Advocacy," [Understanding Our Gifted](#), March/April 1996  
[Assertiveness and Effective Parent Advocacy](#) by Marie Sherrett  
Innovative ideas that have worked for other parents...

[Blending Gifted Education and School Reform](#) (ERIC Digest #525) by Gail E. Hanninen  
A process for assuring that the unique needs of students who are gifted are addressed within the context of systemic reform...

[A Civil Rights Action for Gifted Children](#) ★ by Wenda Sheard  
In a an age discrimination complaint Leila Levi filed on August 19, 1999, with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, she outlined discrimination her son has suffered...

[Advocating for a Grade Skip: A Portfolio of Research](#) by Sandy Mixson  
A parent's recipe for successful advocacy!

[Dealing with Schools](#) reprinted from MontAGe, by Valorie J. King  
Several great essays for gifted parents dealing with the schools, including "Gifted? I See No Gifted Children Here!," "What's Really Going On Here?," and "In the Principal's Office"

[Do I Stay or Do I Go?](#) by Meredith Warshaw  
It is important that we teach our children both lessons - that when things get tough, we try to fix the situation, and that when the situation is unsalvageable, we look for other alternatives and make the best choice we can.

[Getting Change in the System](#) by Monique Prevost Lloyd

[Gifted Mandates, by state or province...](#) collected by Carolyn K.  
Does your state or province mandate gifted education? Gifted IEP's? Who can you contact for more local information...

[How to Make Parent-Teacher Conferences Worthwhile and Productive](#) by Arlene DeVries  
Excerpted from the December 1996 issue of "Parenting for High Potential" published by NAGC

[Important Lessons for Advocacy](#) by Leslie E. Packer  
Although this is written for parents of children with Tourette's Syndrome, the lessons are well suited for all of us when advocating for our kids with the schools

[Know Your Legal Rights in Gifted Education](#) (ERIC Digest #541)

Gifted American school children have very limited protections under state and federal laws...

[Learn to Ask Questions, Get Services](#) by Laurie from New York  
Tips for non-confrontational parents

[The Least Restrictive Environment Mandate: How Has It Been Defined by the Courts?](#)  
(ERIC Digest #629)

*"To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities. ... should be educated with children who are not disabled, and ... special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment should occur only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily..."*

[National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent](#) October 1993  
U.S. Department of Education - Office of Educational Research and Improvement study of the "quiet crisis" that continues in how we educate top students

[Parent Advocacy For TAG Students](#) Collection of articles by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1989  
A good summary of parent advocacy, including "A handful of "KNOWS" for parent advocates"

[Prisoners Of Time](#)  
Report of the National Education Commission on Time and Learning, April 1994

[Promoting Gifted Education in Your Community](#) by Kristen Stephens  
Public awareness could rescue gifted programs from budget cuts and benign neglect by gathering much needed support, and parents can play a vital role...

["Proper Mindset" Needed for Effective Advocacy](#) by Sandra Warren  
Do you struggle with ways to convince people that voicing concern for your gifted child does not mean that you're on an ego trip?

[Public Relations: A Necessary Tool for Advocacy in Gifted Education](#) (ERIC Digest #542)  
by Frances A. Karnes and Joan D. Lewis  
Without building the knowledge base for understanding the unique needs and educational methods of gifted education, advocacy is likely to meet with limited success

[Questions Parents Should Ask Schools](#) by James Gallagher  
There are questions that parents of gifted students should ask of their school system regarding the program or services for their children. Their right to ask such questions matches the right of any parent

[Research Should Inform Practice](#) by E. Jean Gubbins

We [educators] should consult research studies, to ensure that purposeful change is made

[School Reform and Gifted Education](#) by Monique Prevost Lloyd

Many educational practices currently in vogue under the umbrella of school reform work against gifted students...

[Social Statistics Briefing Room](#) at Whitehouse.gov

A number of educational test results, including TIMSS, trends in academic progress, trends in drop-out rates, etc.

[How Squid Got Skipped: The Book of Squid](#) by Marjorie

The preparation, the meeting, the decision, and the "Book of Squid"... one parent's successful advocacy story

[Supporting Gifted Education Through Advocacy](#) (ERIC Digest #494) by Sandra L. Berger

Understanding the process and avoiding the pitfalls...

[The Tea and Terrorist Society - Parent Advocacy at the District Level](#) by Monique Lloyd

Many parents feel powerless when dealing with their public schools; this is especially true of parents with highly gifted children

[Ten Tips for Parents of Students](#) by Monique Lloyd

[Testimony of the National Association for Gifted Children](#) Sally Reis

Hearing on Elementary & Secondary Education Act - Educating Diverse Populations, July 15, 1999

[Testimony of the National Network of Families with Gifted Children](#) Susan M. Christensen

Widely-held beliefs that have no basis in fact are frequently the cause of significant harm to populations that are not well understood by the public at large... (July 15, 1999)

[TIMSS - Third International Mathematics and Science Study](#)

1998 results for the largest international study of student achievement...

[What Works!](#) by Monique Lloyd

Innovative ideas that have worked for other parents...

[Wisconsin Gifted and Talented Programs Under Fire](#) by Susan Weinschenk

Why GT Programs are Under Fire... through Suggestions for What to do if Your Program is Under Fire!

# Gifted Endorsement Module Evaluation Form

In an attempt to constantly address the quality and value of the ***Gifted Endorsement Modules***, the role of a critical examination or evaluation becomes essential. While presenting this module or upon its completion, please complete the following evaluation and send it to:

Chris Weber  
COEHS, C&I, Bldg 9  
University of North Florida  
4567 St. Johns Bluff Rd. S.  
Jacksonville, FL 32224

Using a Likert-like scale of 1 to 5, with **1** being **Not Present or Not Appropriate (negative)** and **5** being **Much in Evidence or Very Appropriate (positive)**, rate the following elements of this Gifted Endorsement Module:

**Module** \_\_\_\_\_

- |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) | Flexible structure/sequence                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b) | Modifiable according to student interests       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c) | Diverse use of References and Resources         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d) | Both Lower and Higher Level Thinking Activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e) | Depth of Concepts Covered                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| f) | Multiple Means of Assessment                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| g) | Diverse learning opportunities                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| h) | Originality                                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| i) | Dealing with Contemporary Issues                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| j) | User Friendly                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

General Comments or suggestions(use reverse):

# Nature and Needs of the Gifted

## Gifted Endorsement Module

### A Glossary of Gifted Education

*Giftedness and education from the perspective of sociologic social psychology*

by [Steven M. Nordby](#) © 1997-2002

#### A

**Ability grouping** - Placing students of similar ability in the same class or group for purposes of instruction. Research shows higher academic achievement gains for all students when grouped by ability and taught at a pace that matches their learning rates. Compare with [tracking](#).

**Acceleration** - Faster presentation of content to more closely match the speed at which gifted students learn. Compare with [grade skipping](#). See [pacing](#), [compacting](#).

**Achievement** - Accomplishment or performance; the realization of potential. Compare with [aptitude](#).

**Action** - Intentional, [goal \(2\)](#) directed, or meaningful behavior. [Interactionism](#) is concerned with action. [Behaviorism](#) is not.

**Affective education** - Study of emotions, identifying and dealing with them.

**Alternative schools** - Schools designed with more flexible programs for [exceptional learners](#) or with an [educational philosophy](#) different from regular public education.

**Anti-intellectual** - One who is suspicious or hostile toward intelligent people and their pursuits. This may take the form of "name calling" ([geeks](#) or [nerds](#)) or a more serious form, such as author Edward de Bono's coining of the term [intelligence trap](#).

**Appropriate** - A subjective judgement of suitability often used in phrases such as "appropriate behavior" and "appropriate education" whose definitions are relative to specific cultures, situations, institutional and personal values and [educational philosophies](#). The ability to define and label "appropriate" and "inappropriate" is a jealously guarded power of teachers.

**Aptitude** - Undeveloped potential or ability. Compare with [achievement](#).

**Assessment** - Assignment of value. Academically, this usually means grades. In psychology, it means comparing the tested measures of a subject's mental characteristics (e.g., [intelligence](#), personality, self-esteem) to a [norm](#), or average. See [grading](#), [standardized test](#), [authentic assessment](#), [reliability](#), [validity](#), and [IQ](#).

**Asynchronous development** - Differing rates for physical, cognitive, and emotional development, also known as dyssynchronous development. For example, a gifted child may be chronologically 13 years old, intellectually 18, emotionally 8, and physically 11. The discrepancies are greatest for everyone at the chronological age of about 13, but the extremes displayed by gifted children have led some experts to define giftedness itself as asynchronous development. If you tell a gifted child to "Act your age!" s/he could legitimately respond: "Which one?" See [characteristics of the gifted](#), [middle school movement](#), [peer group](#).

**Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)** - A sub-type of [Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder](#).

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)** - As defined by the American Psychiatric Association, ADHD is a mental disorder characterized by inattention and/or impulsivity. ADD is a sub-type with fewer impulsive symptoms. Earlier labels for these symptoms included "minimal brain dysfunction." Gifted students in understimulating environments may demonstrate identical symptoms. If giftedness, [learning disabilities](#), [depression](#), or other problems are accommodated first,

# Nature and Needs of the Gifted

## Gifted Endorsement Module

ADHD-like symptoms can be reduced or eliminated. ADHD treatment usually includes drug and/or [behavior therapy](#). The effects of drugs on attention, concentration, [frustration tolerance](#), and [conforming behavior](#) are displayed in all children, not just those diagnosed with ADHD. The school-based giftedness accommodations which are best supported by research differ from ADHD behavioral interventions in that they offer [integrated subject matter](#), concern for the whole child and his/her own interests, and they address the emotional as well as cognitive aspects of [learning](#). See also [labeling theory](#), [mental health](#). [Problems in Identification and Assessment of ADHD](#). [ADHD versus Overexcitabilities](#).

**Authentic assessment** - (1) In classroom testing, tests which cover the material actually taught. (2) In psychology, testing under natural, actual conditions rather than in a clinical or artificial environment.

**Average** - See [normal](#), [statistics](#), [mean](#), [median](#) and [mode](#).

### B

**Back to basics** - A conservative advocacy for increased [teaching \(2\)](#) of [basic skills](#) and less [teaching \(1\)](#) of [higher order thinking skills](#) and [enrichment](#).

**Basic skills** - Reading, writing, and arithmetic.

**Battery** - Multiple tests to assess functioning in a variety of psychological areas such as [intelligence](#), [achievement](#), personality, and self-esteem.

**Behavior analysis** - Radically [behaviorist](#) application of [behavior modification](#).

**Behavior checklist** - A list of non-academic behaviors with a rating scale. Used by teachers, parents, or other adults in order to diagnose students as having a disorder such as [ADHD](#) or [SED](#).

**Behavior disorder** - Synonymous with [serious emotional disturbance \(SED\)](#). Behavior disorder is the preferred term of most educators and mental health professionals. See [mental health](#).

**Behavior management** - Techniques of [behavior modification](#) applied to children. [A Behaviorist View of Behavior Management](#).

**Behavior modification** - Changing the environment and using reinforcers (or their absence) to control the behavior of others. Practitioners set up the environment to prompt a behavior, then reward the desired behavior and/or [punish](#) undesired behavior in that specific situation. The absolute control of reinforcers, the maintenance of the behavior when environmental controls are removed, and the [generalization](#) of the behavior to other situations are problematic. It tends to be used to produce [conformity](#) and obedience. See [behaviorism](#), [mental health](#).

**Behavior therapy** - [Behavior modification](#).

**Behaviorism** - A deterministic, stimulus-response theory of psychology which forms the basis for [behavior modification](#) and many common teaching methods. Behaviorism is concerned only with observable behavior, not with internal processes, meanings, emotions, attitudes, beliefs or values. Accounts of these things are treated as merely "verbal behavior." In behaviorist teaching strategies, the teacher, not the student, establishes the [goals](#), directs and controls the environment, and makes [assessments](#). See [educational philosophy](#). Contrast with [Constructivism](#), [interactionism](#).

**Brain based teaching** - Application of research from neurology and clinical and cognitive psychology to design and orchestrate lifelike learning experiences that exercise

- the ability to detect patterns and make approximations,

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- the capacity for various types of memory,
- the ability to self-correct and learn from experience through analysis of data and self-reflection, and
- the inexhaustible capacity to create,

so as to optimize the extraction of meaning for the individual learner. Brain based teaching incorporates [integrated curriculum](#), and is built on these principles:

1. The brain is a parallel processor.
2. Learning engages the entire physiology.
3. The search for meaning is innate in human nature.
4. The search for meaning occurs through patterning.
5. Emotions are critical to patterning.
6. The brain processes parts and wholes simultaneously.
7. Learning involves both focused attention and peripheral perception.
8. Learning always involves conscious and unconscious processes.
9. We have at least two different types of memory: a spatial memory system and a set of systems for rote learning.
10. We understand and remember best when facts and skills are embedded in natural, spatial memory.
11. Learning is enhanced by challenge and inhibited by threat.
12. Each brain is unique.

*"Our purpose here is to identify some features of the innate drive that students have to act and to understand. Educators need to capitalize on these drives. In fact, this is precisely what exceptional teachers of gifted and talented students do. They provide opportunities for students to pursue their own interests. They support student creativity. They provide a rich and stimulating environment and in that context introduce students to more and more of what the world has to offer. That is the general philosophy that should apply to all students, everywhere." -- Renate Nummela Caine and Geoffrey Caine (1991), *Making Connections: Teaching and the Human Brain*. See also [Montessori method](#).*

**Brain lateralization** - Specialization of the brain hemispheres. In right handed people, the right brain hemisphere is more involved with spatial relations, imagery, and non-verbal, non-sequential processing, while the left brain hemisphere is more involved in verbal and sequential processing.

**Bright** - See [levels of giftedness](#).

## C

**Ceiling effect** - Compression of top scores on a test. For example, if a group IQ test can only measure reliably to 130, then a student with an IQ of 160 (if measured by some other test) may only score 130 due to the ceiling effect of the group test. Group intelligence tests often have low ceilings, so a relatively low IQ score, perhaps 115, could be accepted as evidence of potential giftedness. See [intelligence quotient](#).

**Characteristics of the gifted** - The following characteristics are common but not universal:

- Shows superior abilities to reason, generalize or problem solve.
- Shows persistent intellectual curiosity.
- Has a wide range of interests; develops one or more interests to considerable depth.
- Produces superior written work or has a large vocabulary.
- Reads avidly.
- Learns quickly and retains what is learned.
- Grasps mathematical or scientific concepts readily.
- Shows creative ability or imaginative expression in the arts.
- Sustains concentration for lengthy periods on topics or activities of interest.

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- Sets high standards for self.
- Shows initiative, originality, or flexibility in thinking; considers problems from a number of viewpoints.
- Observes keenly and is responsive to new ideas.
- Shows social poise or an ability to communicate with adults in a mature way.
- Enjoys intellectual challenge; shows an alert and subtle sense of humor.

These characteristics can lead to conflicts in the regular classroom, as the gifted child may:

- Get bored with routine tasks.
- Resist changing away from interesting topics or activities.
- Be overly critical of self and others, impatient with failure, perfectionistic.
- Disagree vocally with others, argue with teachers.
- Make jokes or puns at times adults consider inappropriate.
- Be so emotionally sensitive and empathetic that adults consider it over-reaction, may get angry, or cry when things go wrong or seem unfair.
- Ignore details, turn in messy work.
- Reject authority, be non-conforming, stubborn.
- Dominate or withdraw in cooperative learning situations.
- Be highly sensitive to environmental stimuli such as lights or noises.

These reactions of gifted students to the regular education environment are [normal](#) only within the context of an understanding of the gifted. Without that understanding, they may be used to label the student as [ADD/ADHD](#) or [SED](#). See [overexcitabilities](#).

**Compacting** - Eliminating repetition, minimizing drill, and [accelerating](#) instruction in basic skills or lower level classes so that gifted students can move to more challenging material.

**Conformity** - Unexceptional behavior and/or [convergent thinking](#).

**Constructivism** - The theory that new knowledge is an active product of the learner integrating new information and perceptions with prior knowledge. It is based on the work of John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky, and complementary with [interactionism](#). [Educational philosophies](#) based on constructivist ideas stand in contrast with [behaviorist](#) teaching techniques, such as [Direct Instruction](#).

**Content** - The academic subject matter studied in an educational program or class.

**Convergent thinking** - Thinking which results in conventional solutions and answers or [confomity](#). Contrast with [divergent thinking](#).

**Cooperative learning** - Students working in small groups, where often the same grade is given to all. In heterogeneous groupings, achievement and [extrinsicly motivated](#) students may dominate the group and do all the work so their own grades don't suffer, and [underachievers](#) may simply withdraw or refuse to participate. Cooperative learning groups with students of similar ability with complementary skills tend to work most smoothly.

**Counseling the gifted** - Gifted students can benefit from talking with counselors educated in the [characteristics](#) of the gifted. Without such education, counselors may misinterpret these characteristics as psychological disorders. Because counseling consists largely of talk, the counselor may also be manipulated, fooled, or looked down on by students highly gifted in verbal ability and reasoning skills. See [mental health](#).

**Creativity** - Artistic or intellectual inventiveness. "Stamped out of kids by third grade," says education professor George Sheperd, University of Oregon. Creativity depends on [divergent thinking](#), but schools emphasize and reward [convergent](#)

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[thinking](#) and [conformity](#). Arts are a safe outlet, but that doesn't help the child who's more interested and intuitive in science and math. Silliness, immaturity and disruptive behavior are characteristics of students whose creativity has been stifled.

**Criterion-referenced** - Measurement is compared to an acceptable standard, such as a test of [mastery](#).

**Critical thinking skills** - The [higher order thinking skill](#) of applying logic in order to reduce ambiguity and lead to understanding of complex problems or ideas. Educators may use [task analysis](#) to develop step by step methods to teach critical thinking skills, but critical thinking itself cannot be reduced to step by step thinking.

**Curriculum based assessment** - See [authentic assessment \(1\)](#).

## D

**Depression** - There is some research evidence and considerable anecdotal evidence that the gifted are at a significantly higher risk for depression and suicide than the general population. This may be due to [characteristics](#), such as keen insight into the inequities of life, and [asynchronous development](#), which make the gifted individual feel out of place in the social structure. [Counseling](#) with someone fluent in the issues surrounding giftedness can be helpful.

**Development** - Cognitive (intellectual), emotional and physical growth. See [asynchronous development](#).

**Deviance** - Behavior outside a [norm](#). Displaying gifted behaviors is, by this definition, deviance. See [normal](#), [social control](#).

**Diagnostic test** - An [assessment](#) prompted by a perceived problem in order to determine current level of functioning. Test results are then used to prescribe a solution.

**Direct instruction (DI)** - Teacher directed and structured [programmed instruction](#) in explicit skills with an emphasis on efficiency. The teacher sets the [goals](#), chooses the materials, and sets the [pace](#). Instruction proceeds through specific steps:

1. demonstration,
2. guided practice,
3. feedback, and
4. independent practice.

DI requires [pretesting](#) and [ability grouping](#), and is most often used in primary and remedial reading. It is ineffective in teaching things which are not easily broken into ordered tasks, such as complex problem solving, [creativity](#), and [higher order thinking skills](#).

**Discipline** - (1) An area of knowledge; (2) training or treatment, often [punishment](#), to control behavior. See [structure](#).

**Discovery method** - A variety of student-centered approaches to teaching, including the [Socratic method](#), in which the teacher acts as a guide and/or resource. Unlike [programmed instruction](#), the emphasis is not on efficiency in mastering a predetermined body of knowledge, but in developing students' abilities to learn how to learn. Discovery is an assumed method in [unschooling](#).

**Divergent thinking** - Thinking which results in novel, unique, or creative solutions or answers. See [creativity](#). Contrast with [convergent thinking](#).

**Dysynchronous development** - See [Asynchronous development](#).

## E

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**Educational philosophy** - The basic value orientation on which educational systems, agendas, and programs are built. Conflicting educational philosophies lie at the heart of many problems in getting [appropriate](#) education for the gifted. See [human nature](#), [middle school movement](#), [behaviorism](#), [constructivism](#), [interactionism](#), [homeschooling](#), [unschooling](#), [Montessori method](#).

**Educational psychology** - A branch of psychology which studies [learning](#) and [teaching](#).

**Educational reform** - Popularly used to describe efforts to increase [standanrdized test](#) scores of public school students. As such, it is more a description of [assessment](#) reform than a change of [educational philosophies](#) or methods, although a [back to basics](#) philosophy is often implied.

**Elitist** - A criticism of [gifted education programs](#). If students in gifted programs act as if they are socially or morally superior, or if the program supports the social order rather than identifying and serving all gifted students, then charges of elitism have merit. Gifted programs which serve gifted students from all social classes and ethnic groups, whether achievers, [underachievers](#) or handicapped, are not elitist.

**Emotional shutdown** - A psychological defense mechanism characterized by withdrawal. A gifted student in a hostile or anti-intellectual environment may react this way. See [underachievement](#).

**Empathy** - Understanding and feeling from the point of view of the other person, believed in [interactionism](#) to lie at the heart of development of self and society.

**Engaged time** - That part of [on-task](#) time actually spent with the subject matter. One sociologist has estimated non-engaged time to be 45 percent of the school day (Richard Everhart, *Reading, Writing and Resistance* 1983).

**Enrichment** - Deeper coverage of [content](#) often provided for gifted students. Contrast with [acceleration](#).

**Estimated true score** - A calculation to move the score a student gets on a test closer to average based on the [reliability](#) of the test. See [Estimated True Scores](#).

**Evaluation** - See [assessment](#).

**Exceptional learners** - Students with an [IQ](#) in the bottom (retarded) or top (gifted) three percent of the population, or those with other physical or mental differences which affect learning. See [special education](#).

**Exceptionally gifted** - See [levels of giftedness](#).

**Extrinsic motivation** -Reinforcers, rewards, or incentives used by one person to bring about desired behavior in another person. See [behaviorism](#). Contrast with [intrinsic motivation](#).

## F

**Free appropriate public education (FAPE)** - As required by [IDEA](#), instruction to disabled children, at no cost to parents, provided by the public school, which allows students to make satisfactory progress.

**Flynn effect** - A rise in IQ of the general population of about 3 points per decade, discovered by James Flynn of New Zealand in the early 1980's. If true, the average person of 100 years ago would be considered retarded today. A variety of explanations have been offered, either explaining the rise as an artifact of testing or as a *real* increase in intelligence, but no explanation has gained widespread acceptance. To compensate for the IQ increase, test makers select a new sample for the [norm reference](#) on their tests about every ten years. See [IQ](#).

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**Frustration tolerance** - Ability to continue working to solve a problem even when setbacks are encountered or little progress is made.

### G

**Geek** - A label for a person who does not seem to fit in socially because of high intelligence or achievement. Sometimes used interchangeably with [nerd](#), but geek implies higher social status.

**Generalization** - (1) In [behaviorism](#), applying skills learned in one situation to other situations. (2) In research, applying the results of one study to the general population.

**Genius** - A popular term for extraordinary intelligence which has no fixed meaning in education or psychology, where it is rarely used.

**Gifted** - Having superior mental ability or [intelligence](#). A label of potential. The intellect and emotions of gifted students are both quantitatively and qualitatively different. See [characteristics of the gifted](#), [labeling theory](#), [overexcitabilities](#), [levels of giftedness](#).

**Gifted programs** - Special academic and social opportunities which try to meet the needs of gifted students. See [acceleration](#), [ability grouping](#), [enrichment](#), [independent study](#), [pull-out](#), [special education](#).

**Goals** - (1) As written in an [IEP](#), goals are the desired long-term outcomes of [individualized instruction](#). (2) In the philosophy of Dreikurs, the natural, healthy goal of children is to achieve belonging and significance. When this is thwarted, mistaken goals of attention, power, revenge or inadequacy take their place. When a child reaches adolescence, the more complex, healthy goal of individuation (establishing one's own identity by rebelling or breaking away) enters the mix. (3) When choosing their own goals, students who feel responsible for their success tend to choose reasonable goals. [Illustration](#).

**Grade advancement** - See [grade skipping](#).

**Grade skipping** - Promotion to a higher grade. Often confused with [acceleration](#). A grade-skipped gifted child can still learn at an accelerated rate and may eventually outperform students at a higher grade placement.

**Grading** - [Assessment](#) of academic [achievement](#).

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### H

**Higher order thinking skills** - Abstract reasoning, critical thinking, and problem solving abilities. See [Critical thinking skills](#).

**Highly gifted** - See [levels of giftedness](#).

**Home schooling** - An option for students whose needs are not being met at school. It allows for greater student involvement and responsibility for his/her education and individualization in pacing and content. See [independent study](#), [unschooling](#).

**Human nature** - Assumptions about human nature form the starting point of all [educational philosophies](#). Conflicting assumptions lead to conflicting educational philosophies, which lie at the heart of the problem of defining [appropriate](#) education for the gifted. It involves such dichotomous and contentious issues as good and evil, [needs](#) and desires, absolutism and relativism, free-will and determinism. See [mental health](#), [behaviorism](#), [interactionism](#), [brain based teaching](#).

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**Identification** - The selecting and [labeling process](#). Requirements to be identified as gifted vary between school districts. Generally, a group [IQ](#) test is used to screen students. Those scoring high enough (usually about 115 due to the lower reliability and ceiling effect of group tests) are given an individual IQ test. Those scoring above 130 are usually considered gifted without further ado. Those scoring lower may also be considered gifted based on teacher and parent nominations, outstanding [achievement](#), or other evidence.

**Inclusion** - Grouping of students in regular classrooms without regard to ability. It is based on social, not academic concerns.

**Independent study** - Self-education, often using self-selected resources and driven by student interest.

**Individual education plan (IEP)** - A written document which states the student's unique characteristics and [needs](#), educational [goals](#) and [objectives](#) to meet those needs, and instructional materials and services to be provided.

**Individualized instruction** - [Content](#) and [pacing](#) of instruction geared toward the individual's unique learning styles, abilities, [needs](#), and [goals](#). See [special education](#).

**Individual referenced** - One's score is compared to one's previous score on a test covering the same material in order to show that [learning](#) has occurred.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** - Federal legislation to provide [special education](#) for specific categories of disability. For qualifying disabled students, school districts must provide [free appropriate public education](#) in the [least restrictive environment](#) as specified in an annual [individual education plan](#).

**Inquiry method** - See [discovery method](#).

**Integrated curriculum** - Combination of content from two or more subjects to enhance meaning through interconnectedness of knowledge. See [brain based teaching](#).

**Intelligence** - A general concept of mental ability, often summed up as the ability to learn from experience. The concept was put into a measurable form as [intelligence quotient](#), but theorists such as Howard Gardner believe there are [multiple intelligences](#) which traditional IQ tests do not sample. Others counter that multiple intelligences are merely manifestations of an underlying general factor ("Spearman's g"). Pragmatically in schools, intelligence has come to mean whatever intelligence tests measure, regardless of the test's [reliability](#) or [validity](#).

**Intelligence quotient (IQ)** - A quantitative representation of cognitive ability which results from testing a sample of cognitive skills. The formula is intellectual age divided by chronological age, times 100. For example, someone 10 years old with an intellectual age of 13 would have an IQ of 130. This is called the "ratio IQ."

The scales of different IQ tests vary slightly due to differences in test construction and the sample which provided the [norm](#). Variation in scores is described by the [standard deviation](#). Assuming that intelligence is [normally distributed](#), the IQs of about 95 percent of the population are between 70 (about 2 standard deviations below the mean) and 130 (about 2 standard deviations above the mean). Below 70 is considered retarded, and above 130 is considered gifted. Individual tests such as the WISC and Stanford-Binet are considered the most reliable, but no published test since the older Stanford-Binet Form LM (1972) is valid above 160. Most IQ tests since 1960 have reported IQ as "deviation IQ," which adjusts the ratio IQ scale slightly based on the different [means](#) and [standard deviations](#) of each age group in the sample used to construct the test. Ratio and deviation IQ's seldom differ by more than 4 points. See [levels of giftedness](#), [ceiling effect](#), [multiple intelligences](#).

**Intelligence trap** - A term coined by Edward de Bono referring to what he reports as the tendency of self-ascribed highly intelligent people to be "poor thinkers" because of their arrogance, prejudice, "intellectualizing," ability to defend many sides

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of an issue, and their need to display their superior minds (de Bono (1991), *I Am Right - You Are Wrong*, and (1996), *De Bono's thinking course*). Only rhetorical and anecdotal support exists, and such claims are at odds with the usually accepted [characteristics of the gifted](#). See [Anti intellectual](#). [An Essay on Edward de Bono](#). For additional opinion on the use of de Bono's ideas in business, see [A Review of "Personal Best"](#).

**Interactionism** - A social-psychological theory that the self is formed by interacting with others and that social life depends on the ability to imagine ourselves in other social roles. Interactionist and [constructivist educational philosophies](#) make the student an active partner in all aspects of his/her education, as opposed to [behaviorist](#) philosophies where the teacher selects the [content](#), sets the [pace](#), sets the [goals](#), directs, manipulates and evaluates. Effective strategies with gifted students, especially [underachievers](#), are usually interactionist.

**Intrinsic motivation** - The desire to satisfy natural needs and interests, which includes a desire to understand and make sense of the world. The [discovery method](#), and [unschooling](#) depend on intrinsic motivation. Compare with [extrinsic motivation](#).

### J K L

**Javits Act** - Federal legislation originally passed in 1988 to provide grant money for gifted and talented programs and research. 1997 appropriations were less than one-hundredth of one-percent of total federal special education dollars, less than, for example, literacy programs for prison inmates.

**Labeling theory** - The proposition that labels placed on a person may lead him/her to act the role associated with the label whether or not it was initially accurate. When a label is known to others, they may interpret the labeled person's behavior as abnormal whether it is or not. This changes their actions toward the labeled person so that their interactions reinforce the label. [Gifted](#), [learning disabled](#), [underachiever](#), [ADD](#), and [SED](#) are all labels which may affect students' future behavior even in the absence of objective evidence supporting the label. See [interactionism](#), [normal](#). [Labeling Theory Tested: Pygmalion in the Classroom](#).

**Lateral thinking** - A popular term coined by Edward de Bono in the 1960's for unorthodox thinking. See [divergent thinking](#).

**Learning** - An increase in knowledge or skill.

**Learning disability** - A deficit in a specific area, such as word decoding or arithmetic computation, which is out of line with overall intellectual ability. Some learning disabilities may interfere with proper measurement on conventional [IQ tests](#), so a learning disabled student might be considered gifted with an IQ test score significantly lower than the usual 130 cut-off.

**Least restrictive environment (LRE)** - School placement where the student's needs can be met which most closely approximates the regular classroom.

**Left brained** - See [brain lateralization](#).

**Levels of giftedness** - According to [IQ](#) measurements, the following labels are generally accepted:

- Bright - 115 and above
- Gifted - 130 and above
- Highly gifted - 145 and above
- Exceptionally gifted - 160 and above
- Profoundly gifted - 175 and above

Because of measurement error and [ceiling effect](#), the exceptionally and profoundly gifted labels are often used interchangeably.

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### M

**Mean** - Arithmetical average.

**Median** - A measure of central tendency where half the scores are above and half below.

**Mental health** - A concept based on socially acceptable behavior and subjective feeling. Simplified, here are two competing philosophies: (1) People need to have their natural, selfish impulses controlled in order to fit into society, or (2) Like physical health, mental health is something people grow toward naturally. See [behaviorism](#), [interactionism](#), [human nature](#), [labeling theory](#), [Montessori method](#).

**Middle school movement** - Advocacy of developmental approaches to schooling in grades 5 through 8 which build the curriculum around perceived social-emotional needs of the average early adolescent. [Asynchronous development](#) and the [characteristics of gifted children](#) makes this problematic. [Tracking](#) and [ability grouping](#) are often eliminated in favor of [inclusion](#) and [cooperative learning](#). Also frequently used: small advising groups assigned to each teacher, team-teaching, interdisciplinary courses or [integrated curriculum](#), personal health and [affective education](#).

**Mode** - The most frequent score.

**Montessori method** - An [educational philosophy](#) based on the ideas of Italian physician/educator Maria Montessori (1870 - 1952). Although originally developed with students [labeled](#) "mentally defective" her tremendous successes led her approach to be widely embraced, especially in upper class pre- and elementary schools world-wide. Montessori saw students' learning as the result of innately self-motivated activity. The teacher's job, then, is to supervise and guide rather than transmit knowledge. Many private and a few public schools in the U.S. call themselves "Montessori," however there is no official body to regulate use of the name and actual teaching practices vary considerably.

**Multiple intelligences** - Constructs of [intelligence](#) that include more aspects of mental ability than the conventional concept of intelligence. Howard Gardner proposed seven intelligences: musical, bodily-kinesthetic, logical-mathematical, linguistic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. He recently added an eighth: naturalist. Conventional [IQ tests](#) measure mainly logical-mathematical and linguistic intelligence. [Intellectual profile illustration](#).

**Multipotentiality** - The idea that gifted children have the ability to succeed in virtually any career. Use of interest inventories and ability tests with higher [ceilings](#) can help differentiate between areas in which students are merely competent and those in which they truly excel and are highly motivated toward.

### N

**Needs** - A word often used in such phrases as "behavioral needs" and "educational needs" which can only be understood when the [goals](#) are known. A statement of needs makes sense only with an explicit or implied "in order to." For example: "The student needs to turn in homework" is meaningful if it is followed by: "in order to earn credit for it" but is nonsense if followed by "in order to learn."

**Nerd** - A particularly socially unattractive or awkward subset of [geek](#).

**Non-production** - Unrealized ability in which the student knows s/he is capable, but chooses not to do the assigned work. See [underachievement](#).

**Norm** - (1) In sociology, a culturally relative guideline for social behavior. (2) In testing, a statistical measure of central tendency, as a [mean](#), [median](#), or [mode](#).

**Norm-referenced** - Measurement is compared to a [norm](#) or average. [IQ tests](#) are norm-referenced tests.

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**Normal** - A range of behavior that is considered socially acceptable. Behavior that tests the limits of normal is normal, but behavior consistently outside normal is considered [deviant](#). Experimenting with behavior is normal for children, especially gifted ones. [Behaviorist](#) educators and psychologists are concerned with ways to produce normal behavior in others. But to be gifted is not normal. Abnormal qualities define leaders, heroes, and eminent people.

**Normally distributed** - Statistically symmetrical around an average, represented graphically by a bell curve. In a normal distribution, the [mean](#), [median](#), and [mode](#) are all equal. [Illustration](#)

### O

**Objectives** - In the [IEP](#), desired outcomes of a shorter term than [goals](#).

**Off-task** - Behavior which the teacher disapproves.

**On-task** - Behavior which the teacher approves.

**Outcome based education** - Teaching designed to lead student to demonstrate a specific level of mastery.

**Overachievement** - Performance that exceeds ability. Because this is not possible, overachievement does not exist.

**Overexcitabilities** - A term originated by Kazimierz Dabrowski to describe excessive response to stimuli in five psychic domains (psychomotor, sensual, intellectual, imaginal, and emotional) which may occur singly or in combination. Overexcitabilities are often used to describe certain [characteristics of the gifted](#). "It is often recognized that gifted and talented people are energetic, enthusiastic, intensely absorbed in their pursuits, endowed with vivid imagination, sensuality, moral sensitivity and emotional vulnerability. . . . [They are] experiencing in a higher key." - Michael Piechowski. Extreme overexcitabilities or a strong imbalance between them may reduce the individual's ability to function in society. See also [ADHD Versus Overexcitabilities](#).

### P

**Pacing** - The speed at which [content](#) is presented and instruction delivered. Pacing which matches the student's rate of learning is optimal. Because gifted students are usually able to learn faster, they often prefer [accelerated](#) pacing.

**Peer group** - People with which one feels equal. Due to gifted students' [asynchronous development](#), they may have very different intellectual, social, and emotional peer groups.

**Perfectionism** - The desire to execute tasks flawlessly. Gifted children may develop perfectionism after entering school, as they perform better than their classmates. Later, such perfectionism may lead to avoiding challenges so as not to appear imperfect. See [characteristics of the gifted](#), [underachievement](#).

**Play** - An important part of the learning process that allows for teamwork, risk taking, [creativity](#), and testing one's ability against others.

**Portfolio** - A collection of student work that demonstrates [achievement](#) for purposes of [assessment](#).

**Precocity** - Development significantly earlier than [normal](#). Most gifted children show precocious intelligence, but not all who develop skills early are [gifted](#): they may reach a plateau, allowing those of average ability to catch up.

**Pretest** - A test given before instruction to determine current level of performance in a specific skill.

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**Prodigy** - A child (usually under age 10) who is able to perform at an adult level in a specific skill. Unlike [savants](#), prodigies often have high intelligence and are aware of their thinking strategies.

**Profoundly gifted** - See [levels of giftedness](#).

**Programmed instruction** - Teaching a predetermined body of knowledge in a predetermined sequence, often also at a predetermined [pace](#). See [direct instruction](#).

**Psychometrics** - The quantitative measurement of mental characteristics, as in [IQ](#).

**Pull-out** - A part-time special educational program that takes [exceptional learners](#) out of the regular classroom for a limited time. Many elementary [gifted programs](#) are once a week, pull-out, enrichment activities. Since gifted students are gifted all day, every day, pull-out programs alone seldom meet their needs.

**Punishment** - Causing psychological or physical pain to another usually with the goal of changing the other's future behavior. Punishment may quickly produce submission or obedience, with longer term side effects such as rebellion, revenge, or withdrawal. See [social control](#).

### Q R S

**Reliability** - The accuracy and repeatability of a measurement.

**Right brained** - See [brain lateralization](#).

**Savant** - A person with exceptional ability in a specific skill, often artistic, mathematical or musical, who seems intuitively to "know" but is unaware of thinking strategies. Savants often display flattened emotions and little [creativity](#).

**School psychologist** - The person who gives [diagnostic tests](#) to students and acts as a consultant to teachers, counselors, and administrators. Like teachers and counselors, they often have special training in disabilities but little or no training in giftedness.

**Section 504** - Federal law mandating accommodations for children with disabilities.

**Self-contained** - A classroom is self-contained if the students in it spend the entire day (or the bulk of the day) with the same teacher. Elementary education is almost always conducted in self-contained classrooms. Self-contained programs can also be geared toward grouping by [ability](#), disability, or other [labels](#) placed on students, such as the label "gifted."

**Self-esteem** - A subjective feeling of self-worth built from the respect and sense of worth reflected back on the person from significant others. Can be altered by [labeling](#) and social [interaction](#).

**Serious emotional disturbance (SED)** - A special education category under [IDEA](#). The terms "[behavior disorder](#)" or "emotional/behavior disorder" are synonymous with SED. A student may be identified as having SED for not having "satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers" or for displaying "inappropriate types of behavior or feelings." The characteristics of the gifted combined with the subjectivity of these criteria may lead educators to mislabel some gifted children as SED. See [labeling theory](#).

**Social control** - Formal and informal enforcement of social [norms](#) and values. See [behavior modification](#), [discipline](#), [deviance](#), [mental health](#), [normal](#).

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**Socialization** - Acquiring the cultural values, knowledge and skills which allow one to function productively in a society. Pro-[inclusion](#) and anti-[homeschooling](#) arguments are often based on the socialization value of the heterogeneous classroom. However, there is no empirical evidence that [ability grouped](#) or homeschooled students have poorer social skills.

**Socratic method** - Dialog and discussion to expose logic, meaning, and truth. See [discovery method](#).

**Special Education** - The promise of [individualized instruction](#) for [exceptional learners](#). [Appropriate](#) education is supposed to be based on the unique characteristics of each student but often is provided categorically according to the [labels](#) placed on students. Federal law does not mandate special education for the gifted, but some states have their own mandates. [Appropriate](#) special education for [underachieving](#) gifted students is extremely rare.

**Standard deviation** - A statistical measure of variability from the [mean](#). To calculate it, find the difference of each and every score from the mean, square each difference, average them, then take the square root. For IQ tests, the mean is designed to be 100, and the standard deviation is calculated to be about 15 or 16. See [intelligence quotient](#), [norm](#), [normally distributed](#).

**Standardized test** - A test taken by many students under identical conditions which allows results to be compared statistically to a standard such as a [norm](#) or [criteria](#). See [reliability](#), [validity](#).

**State mandates** - In the absence of a federal mandate for gifted education, many states have passed mandates. The level, quality, and availability of services varies widely from state to state.

**Statistics** - Quantitative abstractions of group measurements, such as [mean](#), [median](#) and [mode](#). Statistics about groups of individuals are often invoked erroneously to define characteristics of an individual, regardless of contradictory evidence, as in [Estimated True Scores](#).

**Structure** - Social organization and rules to minimize the hassles of routine tasks so people can get on with more interesting aspects of living. Functional structures define what's important and stress it, define what's not important and ignore it, and minimize everyone's inconvenience. Structure enables social functioning, but excessive structure limits [creativity](#), spontaneity and motivation. See also [mental health](#).

## T

**Task analysis** - Breaking down complex skills into a highly structured series of simpler, smaller, sequential subskills, and omitting [higher order thinking skills](#).

**Teaching** - (1) [Actions](#) intended to induce [learning](#) ([interactionism](#)). (2) Activities which result in [learning](#) ([behaviorism](#)). See [teaching methods](#).

**Teaching methods** - See [programmed instruction](#), [direct instruction](#), [discovery method](#), [Socratic method](#), [unschooling](#), [Montessori method](#).

**Teacher preparation** - Regular education teachers are required to pass courses in disabilities but not giftedness. Even most teachers of the gifted have not had specific training. Many are told: "The gifted can take care of themselves." Education majors have the lowest average scores on standardized tests such as the GRE, which does not bode well for their capacity to understand the [characteristics of the gifted](#) and provide [appropriate](#) education for them.

**Tracking** - Full-time, often permanent assignment to achievement groups. Compare with [ability grouping](#), where students may be temporarily grouped and regrouped for immediate instructional needs.

**Twice special** - A student both gifted and handicapped, for example, gifted and [learning disabled](#).

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### U

**Underachievement** - A significant difference between ability and performance. A gifted underachiever is often defined as having superior intelligence, yet working below grade level. Underachievement is sometimes differentiated from [non-production](#) by including a psychological factor of perceived inability to succeed academically. Some underachievers may withdraw, others may become disruptive. Factors that can contribute to underachievement include:

- Lack of respect for the individual.
- An overly competitive environment.
- Inflexible and rigid structure.
- Stress on external evaluation and criticism.
- Authoritarian control.
- Unrewarding curriculum.
- Family conflicts, such as divorce.

Underachievement shows up often in the most stressful grades: fourth, when students stop learning how to read and start reading to learn; and ninth, with adolescence and the transition to high school.

Underachiever, like gifted, is a [label](#) relative to expectations. Underachievement may also be viewed, then, as a case of unreasonable adult expectations. [Helping the Underachieving](#).

**Unschooling** - A [constructivist](#), [interactionist educational philosophy](#) which relies on the natural desire of the child to make sense of the real-world environment around him rather than the environment of school. See [intrinsic motivation](#), [human nature](#).

### V W X Y Z

**Validity** - (1) In testing or [assessment](#) - A measurement's ability to measure what it purports to measure. (2) The truthfulness of an argument, i.e., how well the hypothesis is supported by the evidence.

### Links

Want a second (third, fourth) opinion? These links are not in any particular order, they are not sponsors, and I do not necessarily endorse the views expressed:

[Eduspeak Terms and Glossary](#).

[Eduspeak Explained](#).

[BC Ministry of Education - Special Programs: Special Education](#).

[glossary](#) (Charles County Public Schools, Maryland).

[Glossary by Dr. Michael Sayler, University of North Texas \(1993\)](#).

[Best Practice Research](#) (The Minnesota Gifted and Talented Development Center).

[A Glossary of Terms](#) from Pennsylvania Association for Gifted Education.

[Education Week](#) also has a [glossary](#) of education terms.

xN&Ns appendix glossary <http://members.aol.com/svennord/ed/GiftedGlossary.htm>

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[ERIC's Glossary of Measurement Terms.](#)

[Taking Children Seriously Short Glossary.](#)

[Harcourt Brace's glossary of educational measurement terms.](#)

[Harcourt: AP Dictionary of Science and Technology: Social Sciences.](#)

[A glossary of Dabrowski's terms and concepts.](#)

More links can be found on my [Education and Society](#) page.

## About

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I have been receiving e-mails asking for my qualifications, publications, and references. My usual answer goes something like this:

My qualifications for writing my Glossary are this: **I wrote it.** The material stands or falls on its own merits. I will not engage in “my qualifications are better than yours” arguments. There is little on my pages that can’t be found reading back issues of the *Roeper Review* and the *Handbook of Gifted Education*. In cases where I directly quote a source or refer to anything beyond the general literature of the field, I have cited the source in the text.

I should probably add that understanding theory and methods, both qualitative and quantitative, in the social sciences is a prerequisite to judging the validity of my work.

My Glossary has been on the Net since May, 1997. I have sought expert opinion and revised material on their advice. I have not, however asked for endorsements. I repeat: My work stands or falls on the merits of the information it contains. If your instructor/professor/supervisor has a problem with that, I’m sorry.

If you would like to see specific terms added, or you believe a term in the Glossary is incorrectly or poorly defined, or have any other suggestions, please [email me](#).

*For Dorian Pine*

**PEACE**

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***Archived Information***

*National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent - October 1993*

## **Part I.**

### **A Quiet Crisis in Educating Talented Students**

In a broad range of intellectual and artistic endeavors, America's most talented students often fail to reach their full potential. These students are or have the capability to be outstanding, whether in mathematics, writing, dance, history, athletics, or any important human endeavor. They excel at intellectual and artistic endeavors that are complex, difficult, and novel. They often learn rapidly and are bored with repetition. They are often tenacious in pursuits that interest them. The way in which they learn sets them apart from most other children and challenges educators and parents.

Despite sporadic attention over the years to the needs of bright students, most of them continue to spend time in school working well below their capabilities. The belief espoused in school reform that children from all economic and cultural backgrounds must reach their full potential has not been extended to America's most talented students. They are underchallenged and therefore underachieve.

That so many of our students work below their potential has grave implications for the nation. The scholarship, inventiveness, and expertise that created the foundation for America's high standard of living and quality of life are eroding. Most top students in the United States are offered a less rigorous curriculum, read fewer demanding books, complete less homework, and enter the work force or postsecondary education less well prepared than top students in many other industrialized countries. These deficiencies are particularly apparent in the areas of mathematics and science.

The talents of disadvantaged and minority children have been especially neglected. Almost one in four American children lives in poverty, representing an enormous pool of untapped talent. Yet most programs for these children focus on solving the problems they bring to school, rather than on challenging them to develop their strengths. It is sometimes assumed that children from unpromising backgrounds are not capable of outstanding accomplishment. Yet stories abound of disadvantaged children who achieve at high levels when nurtured sufficiently.

Ultimately, the drive to strengthen the education of students with outstanding talents is a drive toward excellence for all students. Education reform will be slowed if it is restricted to boosting standards for students at the bottom and middle rungs of the academic ladder. At the same time we raise the "floor" (the minimum levels of accomplishment we consider to be acceptable), we also must raise the "ceiling" (the highest academic level for which we strive).

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The President and the nation's governors recognized this need at the 1989 Education Summit held in Charlottesville, Virginia. They defined six National Education Goals and declared that meeting them by the year 2000 "will require that the performance of our highest achievers be boosted to levels that equal or exceed the performance of the best students anywhere. . . We must work to ensure that a significant number of students from all races, ethnic groups, and income levels are among our top performers." This challenge cannot be ignored.

### Indicators of the Crisis

Perceptions exist that education problems are confined largely to children at risk of school failure. Many education reports have articulated problems in general education, but they have ignored the condition of education for the nation's most able students. There is mounting evidence that gifted and talented students do not learn as much as they could and compare unfavorably with students in other countries. The following indicators tell the story:

### National Assessment of Educational Progress

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) provides one of the few indicators of how well American students achieve. These tests are not intended to give specific information about the nation's more capable students. However, the results show that very few students perform at NAEP's highest level--a level that is not very demanding. NAEP considers the advanced level to be what is needed for college-level performance.

NAEP tests have found that the percentage of high school seniors performing at the level needed for college work is far lower than the percentage who enroll in college. For example, 58 percent of students who graduated from high school in 1988 enrolled in 2- and 4-year colleges, but

- Only 7 percent of 17-year-olds could solve multi-step mathematics problems such as finding percentages, a skill that does not require advanced algebra or calculus (1990);
- Less than 5 percent of 17-year-olds could interpret historical data at a level that is expected for college work;
- Only 6 percent of 17-year-olds tested in civics could answer questions such as who in the federal government has the power to tax;
- Only 9 percent of 17-year-olds knew enough science to infer basic relationships and draw conclusions using detailed scientific knowledge (1990);
- Only 1 in 100 high school seniors chose to write a coherent response of more than one paragraph to an essay question (1990); and
- Only 7 percent of high school seniors could read at the advanced level (1990).

The results of the NAEP tests suggest that the curriculum offered throughout the nation fails to prepare most students to operate at advanced intellectual levels. As Al Shanker,

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president of the American Federation of Teachers, points out, even the questions at the highest levels of these tests "do not require knowing Dickens or Shakespeare or calculus or difficult concepts in history or science. They require the kinds of skills people who have completed high school need in order to find their way in the world."

Low academic expectations in American elementary and secondary schools go on to create problems when top students enroll in college. Many of these students must struggle to keep up with the demands of their courses, and, in some cases, they drop out of college or avoid tough classes because of insufficient preparation. Colleges and universities may respond both by providing more remedial instruction and by lowering their academic standards.

### **Scholastic Aptitude Tests and Advanced Placement Data**

Scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), required for admission to many American colleges and universities, also provide an unimpressive portrait of the academic accomplishment of America's top students. They show that:

- Since 1972, the number of students with high scores (over 600 out of a possible 800) declined by more than 40 percent on the verbal portion, with 1989 yielding the fewest students scoring between 700 and 800 since 1984. The average entering scores to the most selective colleges in 1970 ranged from 670 to 695 on the verbal portion; in the mid-1980s, they ranged from 620 to 640.
- The number of high scorers on the mathematics section has not increased since 1972.
- Among high-scoring students on the mathematics section, the proportion interested in becoming mathematicians, scientists, or engineers--three areas where the country has a growing demand--has declined steadily since 1982.

Caution is needed when looking at SAT scores because the difficulty of the test may have become easier over time. Advanced Placement (AP) scores, on the other hand, have been remarkably stable in the past 20 years despite tremendous growth in AP enrollment. Minority participation in the program, which offers students the opportunity to complete college-level studies during secondary school, has steadily increased. This suggests that students can meet the challenge when academic standards are set high, fueling the argument that much more can be expected of students.

### **Tests of International Comparison**

Whatever our national indicators show, it is no longer sufficient for the United States to examine the achievement of its students solely with internal comparisons. As competition stiffens with other countries, international comparisons provide perspective on America's ability to survive in a global economy.

Americans assume that our best students can compete with the best students anywhere. This is not true. International assessments have focused attention on the relatively poor

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standing of all American students. These tests also show that our top-performing students are undistinguished at best and poor at worst when compared with top students in other countries.

International test data provide the best comparison of mathematics and science achievement. For a comparison of the humanities, a look at the curriculum and expectations as they are expressed on national exams reveals much about how our students perform. The test data and exam questions clearly show that our best students are not receiving as challenging an education as students in other nations. For example,

### A. Elementary-Level Mathematics and Science

- A 1986 study of first and fifth graders in the United States, Taiwan, and Japan found no innate intellectual differences among the children. Yet in mathematics, only 15 American children were among the top 100 scorers in first grade, and only one was among the top scorers in fifth grade. If proportionately distributed, there should have been about 33 American children in the top group.
- American 13-year-olds performed very poorly when they were tested in 1987 for higher levels of conceptual thinking against 11 other countries and Canadian provinces. The advanced levels involved understanding concepts and interpreting data in mathematics and science.
  - In mathematics, only 9 percent of U.S. students performed at the level that requires understanding concepts, while 40 percent of students from Korea, the top-scoring country, were at this level. At the highest level, less than 1 percent of U.S. students could interpret data compared to 5 percent of Korean students.
  - In science, only 7 percent of U.S. students could apply elementary scientific principles in problem solving compared to 33 percent of students from Korea and 31 percent from British Columbia. At the highest level, less than 1 percent of U.S. students could apply experimental data, while 2 percent of students from Korea and 4 percent of students from British Columbia could do so.
- A large international study of 20 countries, released in February 1992, tested 9- and 13-year-olds in mathematics and science. Findings show that, except for 9-year-olds tested in science, American students ranked close to the bottom when scores of the top 10 percent of students tested in each country were compared.
- Interestingly, American students ranked best on the science test for 9-year-olds, a test given before youngsters in most countries receive formal instruction in science. American students did not rank as well, however, when they were tested at age 13--once schools in all of the countries have begun to provide formal instruction.

### B. Secondary-Level Mathematics and Science

- To gauge achievement of American high school students in science, we can turn to a study comparing U.S. seniors taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses in

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- science with top students in 13 other countries. U.S. students represented the top 1 percent of students in the nation. The study found that American students were
- 13th out of 13 in biology;
  - 11th out of 13 in chemistry; and
  - 9th out of 13 in physics.
- When controlled for selectivity (a higher percentage of the total school population in other countries takes advanced classes), American students scored the lowest of the participating nations in all three areas.
  - In mathematics, the top 1 percent of students in the United States scored very poorly when compared to a similar group of students in 13 countries:
    - 13th out of 13 in algebra and
    - 12th out of 13 in geometry and calculus.
  - When comparing American and Japanese high school seniors enrolled in college preparatory math classes, Japanese students at the 50th percentile scored slightly higher than the top 5th percentile of American students.

Critics charge that international assessment results are skewed because the United States educates a larger portion of students, which lowers the American rankings. But the indicators cited here compare America's top students with top students overseas, and our youngsters still rank at or near the bottom in all subjects tested.

#### **C. International Exams for Students Entering Universities**

Testing programs in other countries drive home the discrepancy in what and how students are asked to learn. Tests reflect what students are taught in their respective classrooms. Whereas the only examinations required of students seeking admission to most American colleges are multiple-choice exams, students in other countries must write extensive essays on their college entrance exams. These essay exams provide a fair comparison of what various nations teach in their curricula and of their expectations for student performance. The National Endowment for the Humanities recently compiled examples of national examinations given to students from other countries leaving secondary education for universities and found the following:

- British and Welsh students are asked to write for 3 hours on questions about U.S. history, such as "Why did Virginians dominate the presidency from 1789 to 1825?" or "To what extent does the conduct of American foreign policy, 1954--1974, offer evidence for the existence and influence of a "military-industrial complex'?"
- French students of philosophy and liberal arts, an area students may concentrate on in secondary school, are asked to write for 4 hours on such questions as "How might one characterize rigorous thought?" or "What does one gain by losing one's illusions?"
- German students are given the text of selected original documents and asked to write for 3 1/2 hours. They respond to such statements as "Disagreement over the person and the role of the king was a key element in the first phase of the French Revolution," and are instructed to describe the development of this tense situation from the meeting of the Estates General to the trial of the king.

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- The 12 member countries of the European Community (EC) have established an examination system that allows students from any of the participating nations to sit for a common set of exams and, if successful, be eligible for admission to any university in these countries. The examination focuses on subjects taught in the 11th and 12th years of schooling and includes five written and four oral exams, which are more challenging than those normally given in the United States.

EC students also are required to study three languages. Beyond the obvious advantage this suggests in the ability to communicate with more people, it also indicates greater knowledge of other cultures and of the nature and study of language and linguistic structure.

America's top students have the potential to achieve at the same levels as their international counterparts, but our students are not challenged to do so. Top-performing students in the United States spend less time in school, spend less time outside school doing homework, and are not asked to work with challenging materials as often as their peers in other countries. According to several studies, more than half of our gifted students fail to achieve in school at a level commensurate with their abilities.

### **Performance of Top Students in Graduate School and in Mathematics and Science Careers**

The poor performance of America's top elementary and high school students, especially in mathematics and science, continues on into college and the professional world.

- Only one-half of America's high-ability high school seniors from the class of 1980 (the top 25 percent as indicated by achievement tests) were estimated to have received a bachelor's degree by 1987. Only one in eight had entered graduate school or postbaccalaureate professional school by that date.
- Among black students who score at the highest levels on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (those with a combined verbal and math SAT score of 1,400 or above), more than 18 percent leave school because of academic problems. Up to 70 percent of black students who enroll in 4-year colleges drop out at some point.
- Graduate school enrollments of American students in mathematics and science have declined substantially in the past 20 years, while the number of foreign-born students enrolled has risen. In 1990, 57 percent of doctorates granted in the United States in mathematics went to students from other nations.
- Minorities are not entering many important fields in mathematics and science. For example, blacks make up 12 percent of the population, yet earn only 5 percent of the baccalaureate degrees awarded each year in science and mathematics, receive only 1 percent of the Ph.D.s, and make up only 2 percent of all employed scientists and engineers in the country. Hispanics make up 9 percent of the population, but represent only 3 percent of the baccalaureate degrees in science and mathematics, 2 percent of the Ph.D.s, and 2 percent of all employed scientists and engineers in the country. Therefore, the fastest growing sectors of our society are seriously underrepresented in leadership positions in science and mathematics.

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Foreign-born students are not taking away jobs from Americans; they are filling jobs that are going empty. The U.S. shortage of graduate students in mathematics and science forces many large companies--such as Texas Instruments, Bell Laboratories, and IBM--to fill jobs, particularly in research, with people educated outside the United States. In Bell Lab's research area, for example, about 40 percent of the professional employees received their precollegiate education in other countries.

These foreign-educated people alone, however, cannot continue to supply the nation with all the scientists, mathematicians, and engineers it needs. Yet American students are being shut out of these professions because of poor preparation and lack of interest. Already spot shortages exist in some science fields in the United States, and unless dramatic changes are made in the way we educate all of our students, including our most talented, the shortages will increase.

### **In Sum . . .**

The indicators tell us that

- Only a small percentage of students are prepared for challenging college-level work as measured by tests that are not very exacting or difficult;
- The highest-achieving American students fare poorly when compared with similar students in other nations; and
- Students going on to a university education in other countries are expected to know more than American students and to be able to think and write analytically about that knowledge on challenging exams.

Educators recognize that tests have limitations. Widely used tests do not gauge creativity or leadership abilities or other important human qualities. Nor do they indicate the potential of students. Still, the message the tests collectively carry is disturbing: America demands less of top students than other countries do. At the same time our need for the highest levels of skills and expertise is on the rise, many of America's most talented students are being denied a challenging education.

### **America's Ambivalence Toward the Intellect**

The American tendency to have low expectations in education is not new, but it is more visible today. The roots of it were apparent in 18th and 19th century America. Writing in the 1830s, Alexis de Tocqueville portrayed the United States as a society with low levels of interest in education and intellect. Ours, he noted, was a culture that values equality. Americans, he observed, are uncomfortable with social or intellectual distinctions or with any hierarchies that they believe can stand in the way of success for industrious individuals. He also noted a tendency of Americans to move toward a "middling standard" that favors conformity over deviation from the norm.

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This distrust of scholarship and reverence for the average has persisted throughout American history. As Richard Hofstadter wrote in his 1970 book *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*:

Again and again, it has been noticed that intellect in America is presented as a kind of excellence, as a claim to distinction, as a challenge to egalitarianism, as a quality which almost certainly deprives a man or woman of the common touch.

But competing with the nation's egalitarian spirit is a conflicting assumption--that individuals should be allowed to "be all that they can be." In America, freedom and liberty are valued as tools to unleashing potential in citizens so that they can go as far as their talent and ambition will allow. The assumption is that people vary in interests and abilities, and those who can excel ought to be able to do so.

These two beliefs--a distrust of the intellect and an assumption that people should be allowed to develop to their full potential--have clashed throughout American history and have muddled efforts to provide a quality education for the nation's most promising students. Today, exceptional talent is viewed as both a valuable human resource and a troublesome expression of eccentricity. As a culture, we admire and reward the brilliant, creative mind after it has invented something practical or produced tangible results. Yet we are not inclined to support those who want to pursue an artistic or intellectual life, and we find ways of discouraging those who wish to do so.

### **Mixed Message to Students**

The nation's high-ability students receive mixed messages. Our society urges these young people to do well in school; but it also encourages them not to flaunt their intelligence and, in some cases, to avoid high grades and excellent academic achievement altogether. America's negative nicknames for these students say a lot about how they are often regarded. Gregory Anrig, president of the Educational Testing Service, explains:

In America we often make fun of our brightest students, giving them such derogatory names as nerd, dweeb, or, in a former day, egghead. We have conflicting feelings about people who are smart, and we give conflicting signals to our children about how hard they should work to be smart. As a culture we seem to value beauty and brawn far more than brains.

Negative stereotypes of high-achieving students have created an atmosphere in which students do not want to be identified as very smart. In one study at three Midwestern high schools, researchers discovered that less than 10 percent of the students with a straight "A" average perceived themselves to be part of the "brain crowd." Moreover, less than one-third of the students nominated to this crowd by their peers perceived themselves to be "brains." The percentage was much lower among females (4 percent) than males (18 percent) but did not vary substantially by ethnic background. Students say they want to

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do well, but not exceptionally well, because it is more important to be accepted by the "in crowd (which) is not the brain crowd."

Peer pressure to avoid academic excellence can be particularly difficult to combat among minority adolescents because they sometimes link it to majority cultural values. High achievers in one inner-city high school populated by low-income blacks were labeled "brainiacs," a term associated with a variety of undesirable characteristics, including wimpishness. In addition, brainiacs were accused of "acting white,"--of disavowing their ethnic heritage in an effort to become accepted by the dominant society.

In short, students feel pressure to finish high school and get good grades. At the same time, however, they are pressured not to work hard, develop scholarly habits, or master a body of knowledge. The message our society transmits to its students is to do moderately well--to strive for academic adequacy, not academic excellence.

### **Implications for American Education**

We know that high expectations produce higher achievement. Yet our expectations for most American students remain at minimum levels of academic competency. We set the bar well below the standards set in many other nations and wonder why our students achieve at low levels. We fail to provide opportunities for students to perform at high levels and then lament that few of our youngsters excel.

To compete on an equal footing with the rest of the world, we must start our children down the path to excellence when they are very young. Learning is cumulative; all students, including the gifted, develop to their full potential only when their special strengths are identified and supported throughout their lives. This is particularly true with economically disadvantaged children because they often face so many impediments to success. We must acknowledge that all schools, whether in affluent or low-income communities, have children with outstanding talent. Our job is to find these children and to develop their full potential.

To help accomplish this goal, we must elicit the help of the entire community. Policymakers, educators, business leaders, civic organizations, and parents can all play important roles in improving education for America's most talented students. Because so many values are learned at home, it is particularly critical for parents of talented children to work closely with the schools and to instill in their children the desire to excel.

Only a challenging educational environment that elevates standards for everyone can create the schools our students need to take their places in tomorrow's world. We can build world class schools; we can raise the ceiling of expectations for all students; and we can provide challenging opportunities for students with outstanding talent. Herein lies the key to better schools.

# Nature and Needs of the Gifted Gifted Endorsement Module

## *Archived Information*

*National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent - October 1993*

### **Part II.**

## **The Current Status of Education for the Nation's Most Talented Students**

A look at education for most talented students reveals deficiencies in how we educate all youngsters. It also uncovers some valuable resources for building a new approach to American education. Toward that end, this section reviews:

- How states and districts identify gifted and talented students;
- The number of students served;
- The kind of support available for educating gifted and talented students;
- The kind of education most gifted and talented students receive in elementary and secondary schools; and
- Effective programs for gifted and talented students and the qualities these programs possess that might benefit all American students.

### **How States and Districts Identify Talented Students**

Most states and localities have developed definitions of gifted and talented students in order to identify such students for special programs. Many of these definitions are based on the definition in the 1972 Marland Report to Congress on gifted and talented education. The Marland Report definition identified a variety of abilities in addition to general intellectual ability, estimated that gifted students make up a minimum of 3 to 5 percent of the student population, and encouraged schools to provide programs to students who are outstanding in any specific area. A large gap exists, however, between the Marland definition and the way most districts identify gifted students. The definition suggests that districts consider a broad range of talents, but most continue to restrict participation in programs for the gifted largely to those with exceptional intellectual ability.

In one recent national survey, 73 percent of school districts indicated that they have adopted the Marland definition; few said that they use it to identify and serve any area of giftedness other than high general intelligence as measured on IQ and achievement tests. Most mainly use tests and teacher recommendations to admit students to gifted and talented programs, limiting participation to students with high general intelligence and good school records and missing many outstanding students with other talents. This practice ignores extensive evidence from psychologists and neuroscientists that youngsters can be intelligent in many different ways, all of which schools can help to develop.

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Several categories of talented children are particularly neglected in programs for top students. These include culturally different children (including minority and economically disadvantaged students), females (who are underserved in mathematics and science programs), students with disabilities, high potential students who underachieve in school, and students with artistic talent. Some schools are discouraged from serving these students by state laws or regulations which require the schools to use certain IQ cutoff scores or specific levels of performance on standardized tests if they wish to receive state funding for gifted and talented programs. However, even in states that do not have test score cutoffs, local schools often choose to use test scores because they are easier to determine and "safer" than more subjective procedures. While state and local definitions display good intentions, the practices used to assess and identify students are often unsatisfactory.

### Number of Students Served

Programs for gifted and talented students exist in every state and in many school districts, but it is difficult to determine the exact number of students served because not all states and localities collect this information. However, we do know that

- Twenty years ago, few programs existed for gifted and talented students. By 1990, 38 states served more than 2 million K--12 gifted students. The remaining states did not report the number of students served, although we know that such programs exist in every state.
- The number and percentage of students identified as gifted and talented varies from state to state due to differences in state laws and local practices. For example, 4 states identify more than 10 percent of their students as gifted and talented, while in 21 states fewer than 5 percent are identified as such.
- Sixty-five percent of the public schools, which together served 75 percent of all public school 8th graders, had some kind of opportunity for gifted and talented students, according to the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) of 1988, which looked at 8th graders throughout the nation.
- Some minority groups are more likely to be served than others. The NELS study found that about 8.8 percent of all 8th-grade public school students participated in gifted and talented programs. Racial and ethnic groups were represented as follows:
  - 17.6 percent of Asian students;
  - 9.0 percent of white, non-Hispanic students;
  - 7.9 percent of black students;
  - 6.7 percent of Hispanic students; and
  - 2.1 percent of American Indian students.
- States that use IQ score cutoffs to identify gifted and talented students are more likely to have larger disparities among racial and ethnic groups.
- Economically disadvantaged students were significantly underserved, according to NELS data. Only 9 percent of students in gifted and talented education programs were in the bottom quartile of family income, while 47 percent of program participants were from the top quartile in family income.

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Certainly, the number of students served in gifted and talented programs has grown substantially in the past 20 years. However, it is also clear that students from economically disadvantaged families and students with unorthodox talents are not being identified in equitable proportions.

### Support for Students

A 1992 Gallup poll found widespread public support for providing additional educational opportunities for students with special talents. When asked about challenging the brightest children, 61 percent of respondents said that the schools should do more than they presently are, 35 percent said the schools should continue to do the same, and only 2 percent said the schools should do less.

When asked, "Would you support or oppose special funding for a program to provide a more challenging education for the smartest and most gifted children, as long as it did not reduce what was offered to average and slow learners?," 84 percent said they would support the funding. Little difference existed in the responses of parents with children identified as having special abilities and in the responses of parents who did not.

In the past 20 years, many state and federal policies have acknowledged the widespread public support to serve outstanding students by setting up special programs. However, many programs for the gifted and talented that began in the 1970s and 1980s have been curtailed or had their funds cut in the past few years because of state and local budget crises.

- **State and local expenses.** It is hard to estimate how much is spent on gifted and talented students because some states do not keep records of these funds. We do know, however, that in 1990, 37 states and trust territories reported spending almost \$395 million in state and local funds on gifted and talented education. This figure, however, represents only 2 cents out of every \$100 spent on elementary and secondary education. Furthermore, it is likely that this figure was a high point for funding. Budget crises and opposition to programs have led recently to program cuts in many states and districts and have tended to fall unevenly on programs for gifted and talented students.
- **State policies that support programs for the talented.** Twenty years ago, only seven states had legislation and funding for gifted and talented education programs. By 1990, most states had legislation and some financial support for these programs. The policies, however, vary greatly from state to state. For example, by 1990
  - Twenty-six states and trust territories required that schools provide specialized services for gifted and talented students;
  - Twenty-seven states and territories passed discretionary legislation that encouraged districts to provide programs for gifted and talented students; and
  - Six states and territories lacked legislation or state support for gifted and talented programs.

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- **Federal involvement.** A small federal program, which gave money to states to develop programs for gifted and talented students, began with the publication of the Marland Report in 1972. That federal effort ended in 1981, and, until 1988, the federal government suspended its direct involvement in education for gifted and talented students.

The Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Act of 1988 reestablished a federal presence. This modestly funded program (just under \$10 million in 1992) supports demonstration grants, a national research center, and national leadership activities designed to focus attention on the needs of students with demonstrated or potential talent. Priority funding is given to efforts to serve gifted and talented students who are economically disadvantaged, speak limited English, or have disabilities.

### Programs and Services for Talented Students

Policies alone do not guarantee that children with exceptional talents will receive a meaningful education. Most gifted and talented programs today are modest in scope. The vast majority of talented students spend most of the school day in a regular classroom where little is done to adapt the curriculum to their special learning needs. Exciting pedagogy and teaching strategies have been developed and refined in some special programs for gifted and talented students. From kindergarten through high school, the education available to talented students is largely insufficient because most schools have not been committed to addressing their needs seriously. Programs for gifted and talented students have served as laboratories of innovation in educational practice. However, few of these approaches have made their way into the regular classrooms.

### Current Elementary School Programs

- **The regular school curriculum does not challenge gifted and talented students.** Recent studies of American education have criticized the curriculum for its lack of rigor. The problem is evident in textbooks, which, despite known weaknesses, remain the chief education tool used to instruct American students. In nearly every subject, textbooks tackle too many topics and cover them superficially. Moreover, many textbooks have decreased in difficulty by two grade levels in the last 20 years, and few if any publishers produce textbooks aimed at above-average students.

The "basic skills" movement, which sought to help students struggling with the regular curriculum to learn more effectively by simplifying learning activities, further weakened the regular school curriculum. All children, not just those with exceptional talent, have suffered from a narrowing of the curriculum; but the gap between the level of the curriculum and the abilities of talented students is the largest of all student groups.

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- **Most academically talented students have already mastered up to one-half of the required curriculum offered to them in elementary school.** In one recent national study of five content areas, elementary school teachers eliminated an average of 35 to 50 percent of the regular curriculum for gifted and talented students after tests at the start of the school year showed that these youngsters had already mastered that much of what was to be taught. These students were then allowed to work on other activities during the time they were released from working on materials that they had already mastered. When the students were retested at the end of the school year, the gifted students excused from large portions of the regular curriculum did better than a control group of gifted and talented students in science and mathematics concepts and stayed even with the control group in all other subjects.
- **Classroom teachers do little to accommodate the different learning needs of gifted children.** In a large national survey, most teachers said they give the same assignments to both gifted and average students almost all the time, and few said they use many "higher level" teaching strategies in their classrooms.

In a follow-up study involving classroom visits, researchers found that 84 percent of assignments for gifted students were the same as those made to the whole class in the five subjects surveyed. The most individualization took place in mathematics, but even there only 11 percent of activities for gifted students contained advanced content and instruction.

- **Most specialized programs are available for only a few hours a week.** One study reported that 72 percent of districts with elementary programs for gifted students use the "pull out" program or resource room approach, where students leave their regular classrooms for a few hours a week to work on special projects. This has not proved to be an especially successful program for most special populations. Other popular approaches include "enrichment" offerings, where students receive extra opportunities to learn, and independent study. Some schools allow students to enter a grade level ahead of schedule, move at their own pace through the curriculum, or offer self-contained classes for talented students. A few school districts provide special schools or allow students to move significantly ahead of their age peers. Many school districts use a combination of approaches. While programs for gifted students often provide challenging learning opportunities, most students with outstanding talent spend most of their time in the regular curriculum with few differentiated opportunities.
- **Students talented in the arts are offered few challenging opportunities.** A few districts provide intense or accelerated arts instruction in magnet schools designed for elementary and middle school students, but such opportunities are not widely available throughout the country. Many elementary schools offer no fine arts instruction, and budget cuts have eliminated arts teachers in other elementary and middle schools. Without basic opportunities in the visual and performing arts, outstanding talent in these disciplines is difficult to discover and cultivate.

### Current Secondary School Programs

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- **Appropriate opportunities in middle schools are scattered and uncoordinated.** Educators have struggled for a long time to find the best way to serve students during their complicated middle school years. In the current reform conversation, middle school educators have spoken forcefully about the importance of addressing students' individual needs. They have also indicated that students should not be singled out or receive special instruction--whether in sports, arts, or academics--for fear of damaging the self-esteem of those not selected.

The consequent ambivalence about "special" programs has led many middle schools to eliminate individualized learning opportunities previously offered to gifted students. Too few middle schools now provide their most talented students with advanced learning opportunities, mentors, extracurricular activities based on students' special interests, or other options for developing their potential. More needs to be done to create middle schools that meet the needs of all children.

- **High school schedules do not meet the needs of talented students.** As Ernest L. Boyer writes in *High School*:

What gifted students want is flexibility: to be allowed to go at their own pace, to satisfy course requirements as quickly as possible, and to move on to new areas of learning. One bright young man put it this way:

Believe it or not, we don't necessarily want to reduce the number of required courses (at least some of us do not). But must we be held to the same timetables as others--so many hours or months or years of a certain subject--if we are able to grasp the fundamentals and move on to a more complex treatment? Or to a new subject altogether?

Writer and filmmaker John Sayles describes the kind of education that worked best for him:

In general, I feel like what was most helpful about school when it worked was the existence of a structure, but with the leeway to go beyond it if you had the inclination. I think both the structure and the freedom were equally important; the structure giving something to react to or from, and the freedom being that there was some encouragement for original thinking as long as you didn't make too much trouble.

- **The college preparatory curriculum in the United States generally does not require hard work from able students.** Students who never have opportunities to work to their abilities never learn to do so. A recent study of America's highest achieving students conducted by *Who's Who Among American High School*

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*Students* found that most of these students study 1 hour or less a day; only 21 percent study 11 hours or more a week. One high school honor roll student indicated that she seldom received homework and studied only when she expected to be tested the next day. A high school valedictorian summarized the consequences of not learning how to work:

I breezed through classes in 12 years, graduated from high school as the valedictorian, and then almost flunked out of college because I never learned to work hard at learning. I feel angry, jealous, and cheated about the potential that was lost as a result of my high school's lack of special programs for the gifted.

- **Small-town and rural schools often have limited resources and are unable to offer advanced classes and special learning opportunities.** Rural schools are the least likely to have special programs for highly able 8th-grade students, according to 1988 NELS data. The low population, poverty level, and generally low tax base prevent most rural districts from providing the same range of options for talented students that larger communities can provide. This is especially troubling because there are often fewer other community resources available in rural areas, making the school the primary center of intellectual and cultural life for students.
- **Specialized schools, magnets, and intensive summer programs serve only a fraction of the secondary students who might benefit from them.** Many larger school districts have established magnet schools to serve various students' needs. Some, such as the Bronx High School for Science which has produced many leading scientists and Nobel laureates, have existed for many years. Eleven states have established residential schools for advanced instruction in mathematics and science; other states have established Governor's Schools or intensive summer opportunities in a variety of subjects. These schools, however, are few and serve only a fraction of the students who would benefit from them.
- **Dual enrollment in secondary school and college is uncommon.** One solution to an unchallenging high school curriculum is to allow some secondary school students to enroll in higher education courses. Minnesota began a postsecondary options program in 1985 to allow high school juniors and seniors to take postsecondary classes at state expense. Earned credits count toward high school graduation, and once students have graduated from high school, they can also ask postsecondary institutions to accept these credits. A handful of other states have followed suit, but such arrangements are the exception rather than the rule.

### Effective Programs for Talented Students

Over the past 20 years, while the regular school program focused on basic skills and minimum standards, programs for gifted and talented students served as laboratories for innovative and experimental approaches to teaching and learning. A variety of educational options were developed in programming and scheduling. Many new

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programs focused on complex thinking strategies and problem solving and used sophisticated teaching strategies.

Residential schools for gifted and talented students, summer programs like Governor's Schools, and the Talent Search academic programs have developed alternative teaching strategies and interesting curriculum approaches. National programs--such as Future Problem Solving, Odyssey of the Mind, National History Day, and the Westinghouse Science Scholars Program--promote and reward critical thinking and problem solving and are often carried out through the gifted and talented education programs in schools. Teaching strategies like the Paideia Program, Philosophy for Children, and the Great Books reading series also are often used in programs for gifted and talented students.

Although most of these programs were not designed exclusively for gifted and talented students, they usually have not been implemented in regular education because educators did not realize their potential for improving all of American education. Now, however, many educators believe that the knowledge and experience that gifted education has gained from these and other outstanding programs can be used to upgrade all of education and are calling for this to be done.

Many programs for talented students are so new and limited that long-term research to gauge their effectiveness has not been completed. The limited evaluations available, however, are encouraging. Through the new federal Javits Gifted and Talented Education Program, more in-depth studies are under way. Javits grants projects seek out and provide educational programs for exceptionally talented students who are economically disadvantaged, speak limited English, or have disabilities. These programs are committed to finding and nurturing the strengths in children, providing promising students with important subject matter to study, and encouraging the habits of hard work. They demonstrate the kind of practices that should be available for many more economically disadvantaged children.

### **In Sum . . .**

Effective programs exist around the country with wonderful teachers who challenge students to intellectual and creative heights. But most children with outstanding talents do not perform at high enough levels. They are restrained by the lack of depth in the regular school program and by the limitations of many special programs designed for them. Their regular classroom teachers make few accommodations for them, despite evidence that these students have mastered significant portions of the regular curriculum. And the special opportunities that do exist for them seldom sufficiently supplement the regular school program and vary greatly from state to state and from school to school. In addition, the practice of identifying gifted and talented students using mainly test data and grades has limited the access to special opportunities of many students who could benefit from them.

To counter these negatives for students with outstanding talents and to improve education for all of America's students, schools must:

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- Expand effective education programs and incorporate more advanced materials into the regular school program;
- Provide all students with opportunities to solve problems, analyze materials and situations, and learn from real-life experiences;
- Identify students who need individual or special opportunities, using test data only as appropriate;
- Serve students identified as having outstanding talent in many places--the regular classroom, a special class, the community, at a university or a museum, in front of a computer, or anywhere the opportunity meets the need; and
- Create flexible schools that enable all students, including the most able, to be grouped and regrouped according to their needs and interests.

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***Archived Information***

*National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent - October 1993*

## **Part III.**

### **The Future of Education for the Nation's Most Talented Students**

In today's climate of education reform, many questions about gifted and talented education remain to be answered. When school practice is being rethought and the norms of general education are changing, where does the education of children with outstanding talent fit? How do we raise the ceiling of educational accomplishment in our schools and provide appropriate opportunities for all? How can we use what we have learned about gifted education in the past 20 years to improve education for all youngsters and provide the caliber of schools we need for the future? What is involved in providing an excellent education for students with exceptional talent?

#### **Emerging Views on Intelligence and Talent**

In the past 20 years, groundbreaking research has challenged the long-held view of intelligence as a fixed, narrow concept measurable by any one test. It is now understood that intelligence is complex, takes many forms, and therefore requires that many criteria be used to measure it. This understanding has led educators to question traditional definitions of intelligence and current assessment practices and procedures. Performance on a single test is no longer a viable way to identify the myriad talents that students possess.

While researchers may disagree on the specifics, there is general agreement that even very bright children vary in the rate at which they learn and in the areas in which they excel. Most researchers agree that there are different ways to be intelligent and different ways that exceptional talent is demonstrated. Most agree that children should not be rigidly labeled and that more emphasis should be focused on the processes of developing potential in children.

Therefore, we can find outstanding talent by observing students at work in rich and varied educational settings. For example, educators can give many children the opportunity to take dance classes with an accomplished instructor and observe them. This enables us to identify the smaller number who have the interest and talent to study dance seriously. Likewise in computer science, educators can provide many students with the opportunity to explore computer technology so that we can identify those inclined to pursue advanced instruction on programming and theory. Providing opportunities and observing performance give the best information on children's strengths.

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### Definition of Children with Outstanding Talent

Neuroscience and cognitive psychology provide us with new insights into what it means for children and youth to be outstanding talents and require us to develop a new definition of this population. The term "gifted" connotes a mature power rather than a developing ability and, therefore, is antithetic to recent research findings about children. The following definition, based on the definition used in the federal Javits Gifted and Talented Education Act, reflects today's knowledge and thinking:

**Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.**

**These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools.**

**Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.**

To put this definition into practice, schools must develop a system to identify gifted and talented students that:

- Seeks variety--looks throughout a range of disciplines for students with diverse talents;
- Uses many assessment measures--uses a variety of appraisals so that schools can find students in different talent areas and at different ages;
- Is free of bias--provides students of all backgrounds with equal access to appropriate opportunities;
- Is fluid--uses assessment procedures that can accommodate students who develop at different rates and whose interests may change as they mature;
- Identifies potential--discovers talents that are not readily apparent in students, as well as those that are obvious; and
- Assesses motivation--takes into account the drive and passion that play a key role in accomplishment.

With a broader understanding of intelligence, and with many ways to identify and develop talent in children, we can build the excellent schools we need for the future and provide our exceptional students with better opportunities.

### Recommendations

The responsibility for challenging students with exceptional talent must be shared by many sectors of society and levels of government. Society must first value intellectual

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and artistic accomplishment in children as much as it values athletic ability or physical beauty. In addition, schools and parents need to encourage hard work, hold high expectations for students, and push students to the outer limits of their potential. Achieving such a goal requires that appropriate educational options be made available for talented students. The following national recommendations for action would provide pathways toward an education that allows American students to be as well prepared as those anywhere in the world:

**Establish challenging curriculum standards.** The nation must establish performance standards in the core subjects that challenge students performing at the highest levels. As state and local governments develop standards, they must ensure that the standards are sufficiently high to challenge talented students. As the floor is raised for all students, so must the ceiling be raised for students operating in the upper range of ability.

- Educators must develop assessment procedures based on standards that accurately measure the accomplishments of students who perform at the highest levels.

**Establish high-level learning opportunities.** The nation must establish comprehensive and advanced learning opportunities that meet the needs of children with outstanding talents in every school in the nation. Opportunities must be as diverse as the talents of the children and enable them to do more in-depth work in the core curriculum; accelerate the rate at which they learn the core curriculum; enroll in special classes in a specific interest area such as the arts; and work in such places as museums, libraries, scientific organizations, and special schools. Flexibility and varied opportunities are essential to meeting the needs of all students, including the talented.

- Schools also must assess students' levels of competence in the regular school curriculum in each of the core subjects and provide alternative learning opportunities for students who have mastered them.
- Communities must establish learning opportunities for students both inside and outside the regular classroom and both inside and outside the school building. Communities also must ensure that students have many options that draw on the community's resources.

**Ensure access to early childhood education.** The nation must ensure that all children, especially economically disadvantaged and minority children, have access to an early childhood education that develops their potential. Young children need rich, varied learning opportunities and teachers and caregivers who look more for their strengths and potential rather than for their perceived weaknesses.

- Communities must establish programs that work with parents and other primary caregivers to help them understand ways to nurture the talents of their children and help them achieve in school.
- Schools must establish a system of communication between preschools and elementary schools to ensure that student strengths identified in preschool continue to be nurtured in elementary school.

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- Communities must train preschool teachers how to identify and develop strengths in children.

These suggestions are not intended to imply that schools should label preschool and primary students as gifted and talented. They should not. Instead, preschools and primary schools should develop a curriculum for all that nurtures the strengths of children and encourages its staff to do the same.

**Expand opportunities for economically disadvantaged and minority children.** The nation must increase opportunities for economically disadvantaged and minority children with exceptional talent to participate in advanced learning experiences. Special efforts are required to overcome the barriers to achievement that many economically disadvantaged and minority students face. Stronger preschool programs and a stronger regular curriculum for all students will aid in this effort. In addition, schools and communities must develop strategies to serve students from underrepresented groups.

- The nation must support research and demonstration projects working to develop talent in diverse populations.
- Schools must eliminate barriers to participation of economically disadvantaged and minority students in services for students with outstanding talents.

**Encourage appropriate teacher training and technical assistance.** Teachers are the key to success in our vision of excellent education. They must be prepared to work with advanced materials and to use complex teaching strategies with a variety of students. Teaching materials appropriate for use with talented students also must be developed. The nation also must encourage the kind of teacher training, research, curriculum, and technical assistance necessary to improve educational opportunities for students with outstanding talent.

- The nation must conduct research on challenging curriculum, assessment standards, and successful teaching strategies.
- Schools must conduct training sessions for teachers on how to provide challenging curriculum and varied learning opportunities that accommodate the different needs of children.
- The nation must provide sufficient financial support from federal, state, and local governments, as well as from the private sector, to carry out these actions.

**Match world performance.** The nation must ensure that high-achieving students in the United States match or exceed the performance of high-achieving students anywhere in the world.

- The nation must study and learn from the education policies and practices of nations whose top students perform well.
- The nation must ensure that tests of international comparisons provide accurate data on top-performing students around the world.

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## A Vision for Excellent Schools

Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of American education helps us to define the kind of schools we need to compete in the world economy. The schools we need in the future must provide a richer curriculum for all students, realize each student's potential, and develop outstanding talent. In the schools we seek

- All children progress through challenging material at their own pace. Students are grouped and regrouped based on their interests and needs. Achieving success for all students is not equated with achieving the same results for all students.
- Diversity is honored in students' backgrounds as well as in their abilities and interests. The classroom, school organization, and instructional strategies are designed to accommodate diversity and to find the strengths in all children.
- Students know that parents, educators, and other important adults in their lives set high expectations for them and watch them closely to ensure that they work to their ability and develop their potential.
- The community provides the resources needed to adapt and enrich the curriculum to meet student needs. School faculty and administrators ensure that community and school resources are matched with students' strengths and needs.
- Students gain self-esteem and self-confidence from mastering work that initially seemed slightly beyond their grasp.
- Students emerge from their education eager to learn and confident that they can join the intellectual, cultural, and work life of the nation.

Everyone wins in the schools we seek. All students have an equal opportunity to develop their talents and to display exceptional talent in educational settings that require sophisticated thinking and a high level of performance. All teachers search for the strengths and talents of their pupils and interests, and nurture those talents. Exceptional students pursue intensively their special talent, allowing the nation to grow intellectually, culturally, and economically stronger.

## Excellence--An Imperative

We must build better schools in order to create a better society. But we need better schools, too, because all children, including those with outstanding talents, deserve an education that helps each of them develop their special qualities. As we go about improving American education, this human element must not be ignored.

Eighteen-year-old Wayne from inner-city Detroit is just one of many youngsters around the nation whose life course was radically altered because he had the opportunity to participate in a program for gifted and talented students. Wayne, a National Merit Scholar, recalls his experience in the Minority Research Apprenticeship Program, a collaboration of the Detroit Public Schools and Wayne State University:

I don't think I'll ever forget it. The first day I worked with the professor he came up to a chalkboard and drew all these nomenclatures, and I just sat

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there with my mouth open. In that lab, I personally synthesized two compounds for anti-cancer drugs, and I can still explain it in laymen's terms: I'm really tricking cancer cells into taking something they think they need to have to reproduce. But once it's inside, this compound kills the cells, like a wolf in sheep's clothing.

During the 9-week summer program, Wayne was particularly touched by the support and guidance he received from the University staff. "It wasn't just a summer program where you came and worked and left," he recalls. "We became very close to people."

This young man went on to win first-place honors in a science fair for an anti-cancer drug project. He subsequently received a full scholarship from Wayne State, where he enrolled in the highly selective Research Careers for Minority Scholars. Wayne eventually plans to earn an advanced degree in biochemistry or organic chemistry. America has many more Waynes who deserve similar opportunities.

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## Websites for Parents

The **Council for Exceptional Children** (CEC) is the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving educational outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities, students with disabilities, and/or the gifted.

[www.cec.sped.org/index.html](http://www.cec.sped.org/index.html)

**The Association for the Gifted** (TAG) was organized as a division of The Council for Exceptional Children in 1958 to help both professionals and parents deal more effectively with the gifted child.

[www.cectag.org](http://www.cectag.org)

The **Gifted Resources Home Page** contains links to on-line gifted resources, enrichment programs, talent searches, summer programs, gifted mailing lists and early acceptance programs, etc. It also contains contact information for many local gifted associations and government programs.

[www.eskimo.com/~user/kids.html](http://www.eskimo.com/~user/kids.html)

The **ERIC** Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education (part of the National Library of Education [NLE], Office of Educational Research and Improvement [OERI], and the U.S. Department of Education) is the world's largest source of education information. You can find information on a wide-variety of education topics such as gifted, social/emotional issues, and educational options.

[ericir.syr.edu/eric](http://ericir.syr.edu/eric)

The **National Association for Gifted Children** (NAGC) is an organization of parents, educators, other professionals and community leaders to address the unique needs of children and youth with demonstrated gifts and talents as well as those children who may be able to develop their talent potential with appropriate educational experiences.

[www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)

**Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted** (SENG) focuses primarily on the adults in the lives of gifted children. SENNG provides information on identification, guidance, and effective ways to live and work with gifted individuals.

[www.SENNGifted.org](http://www.SENNGifted.org)

The **National Parent Information Network** (NPIN) is a project of the ERIC system and is administered by the National Library of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. The mission of NPIN is to provide access to research-based information about the process of parenting, and about family involvement in education.

[npin.org](http://npin.org)

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**Hoagies' Gifted Education Page** is a resource guide for the education of gifted children with links to resources on nearly every aspect of gifted education available on the Internet, plus annotations and first hand information provided by parents.

[www.hoagiesgifted.org](http://www.hoagiesgifted.org)

**Gifted-Children.com: Identification, Encouragement, and Development (GCC)** is an on-line parents' newsletter with networking and information dedicated to making a difference in the education of children with special talents and abilities.

[www.gifted-children.com](http://www.gifted-children.com)

**GT World** is an on-line support community for parents of Gifted and Talented children.

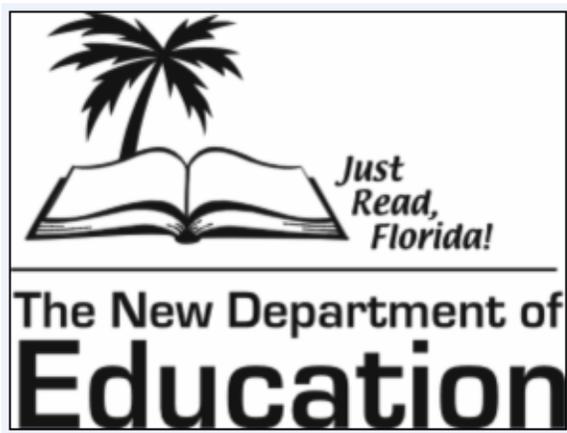
[www.gtworld.org/index.html](http://www.gtworld.org/index.html)

**The Gifted Development Center** serves parents, schools, and advocacy groups with information about identification, assessment, counseling, learning styles, programs, presentations, and resources for gifted children and adults.

[www.gifteddevelopment.com](http://www.gifteddevelopment.com)

**Davidson Institute for Talent Development** is currently one of only two national foundations supporting the profoundly gifted population. The Davidson Institute's mission is to recognize, nurture and support profoundly gifted young people and to provide opportunities for them to develop their talents in positive ways to create value for themselves and others.

[www.davidsoninstitute.org](http://www.davidsoninstitute.org)



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