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ABSTRACT

Perspectives regarding education for the gifted and talented and excellence in education are addressed in this third volume of a 1982 public hearing. Statements from professional associations and from the public concerning education for the gifted are provided. The following positions are taken: there must be increased development of fully-funded education programs for gifted, talented, and creative students; ongoing communication is needed to inform practitioners on educational developments in other states; research is needed along with professional development and teacher training, and summer programs; there is limited understanding of what gifted young children aged 4 to 8 are capable of doing; and in order to better calibrate standardized tests by which the performance and abilities of students are measured, government-sponsored research and development funds are essential. Information is provided on: a 2-week summer institute for gifted and talented high school seniors from Maine; an enrichment program to promote articulation from high school to college for gifted and talented students at Southeastern Massachusetts University; results of a study on the progress of gifted students in special programs; social and emotional components of giftedness; nonachieving gifted students; and a mentor program using volunteer adult professionals to work with the gifted. (SW)

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Education for the Gifted and Talented.

Cambridge, Massachusetts

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I N D E X

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Statements from Professional Associations

Commissioner BAKER. We now come to statements from two communities in education, and we look forward to these accents on our work in this hearing.

The first is by Ms, Loretta Frissora, Coordinator of Gifted Education of the Needham Public Schools, speaking on behalf of the National Education Association.

Ms. LORETTA L. FRISSORA. Mr. Chairman, members of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, participants, and friends of all gifted and talented youngsters:

I am Loretta Frissora, representing the National Education Association, a member of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Educational Block Grants, and Coordinator of the Gifted and Talented Program of the Needham Public Schools.

As a member of the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Association for the Advancement of Individual Potential, I have been engaged in professional and political advocacy in behalf of gifted and talented young people. I am pleased to be here.

My personal welcome to our visitors from

out of town. I do hope that you schedule allows you time to enjoy the brilliant colors of our New England states. The vistas along the Charles River are certainly inspirations in our quest for excellence.

I feel a little bit, standing here today, like the Sunday clergyman who gives the message to his congregation, and then is asked, "Where are the sinners? They belong here."

All of us who have heard the inspiring words on behalf of the gifted are friends of the gifted today, and I wonder where are those who have not listened to us yet. They should be here to bear witness to the inspiration of the words of truth.

In waiting to address my remarks to you, I am kind of conditioned by all of the comments that have been made today, thinking how many of them were repeating the same message. And I began to consider what Moravian said and wondered if he were accurate when he wrote that, of spoken messages, only a bare seven per cent has an impact on the listener. Perhaps, if that is so, my message will add to that seven per cent and, in case it doesn't, I have written my testimony to make sure you pick up the other 93 per cent.

Today, you are engaged in important dialogue as a part of your investigation into the quality of education and those environments that nurture the condition of excellence. The educational system has been inconsistent in providing opportunities and rewards for persons of differing abilities to realize their full potential. The temptation is to suggest a litany of issues that are roadblocks for those who would serve their bright and gifted young people.

Differentiated education is perceived as having a low priority in federal, state, and local school administrations. Your presence here elevates our expectations that indeed our gifted and talented young people have a place on the agenda for excellence. We are anxious for a policy to clarify the status of gifted and talented children. We are anxious to move from a postion of national intention to a statement of recognized, legal policy.

The National Education Association cites among its resolutions a direction that addresses these needs:

The NEA believes that there must be increased development of fully funded education

programs for gifted, talented, and creative students;

... recognizes its responsibility to indicate to educators reliable methods of identifying and teaching these children;

... urges local and state officials to encourage such programs and methods to ensure that these special needs areas are met.

Further, the means must be found to disseminate the information of those programs that have made successful liaisons with mentorships and business. The partnerships of business and education are necessary to bridge the gap between educational theory and the developments in industry that take so long to reach the classroom.

The challenge that faces us - the American educator - is to find harmony for the voices that beg recognition. At no other time in our country's history has there been such a high awareness of the individual student's profile and the number of ways that each feature of that profile can be served. We know more about the development of the human brain and its functions; of ways to condition and invite response; of the emotional paths that direct behavior; and the prescriptions for various learning styles.

We have more advanced technology, methodology, and resources than ever known to mankind. And yet -- it seems only one area of concern is earmarked for prevention or remediation during any given period.

The pathway of resources for gifted and talented has multiple cautions. We are confounded by definitions and descriptions; we are deterred by the multi-faceted notion of expectation and standards; we are seeking determiners for success; and we are plagued by the connotation of "elitist" -- a product of fear and mistrust --.

The issues are compounded by the fact that demands and costs for public services are increasing at a faster rate than are the resources to support them economically. Therefore, individuals, coming together, must develop a position on the important issues to bring influence upon government policymakers.

We are encouraged that direction from the Office of Education listed gifted and talented for support in the E. I. C. A. fund distribution. Formerly, the Title IVC starter funds encouraged local decision makers to implement and expand their educational programs for the gifted student. Numbers of them are being validated for emulation and some adopt-a-program

funds are promoting further adaptations of successful models.

We hail California, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Delaware and other states that have state legislation describing a policy of public responsibility for the education of gifted and talented young people. We appreciate the leadership within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts whose Office for Gifted and Talented is funded for the first time with state funds and Block Grant monies. The state funding is a direct result of political efforts conducted by MA/AIP and encouraged by Senator Gerard D'Amico of the Great and General Court. Senate Bill 247; calling for a policy in the Commonwealth and the maintenance of the Office in behalf of the gifted, has successfully passed readings in the Senate. The actions of all the states that are taking positive steps in these matters, decrease disproportionate funding among programs. The investment of resources in programs for the gifted has potential benefits for all. As Terman wrote in the late fifties -- a time we recall as the Sputnik embarrassment -- (a program) "not merely to satisfy the felt needs of a given time, but also to prepare the way for future appreciation

of needs not yet recognized."

Collaborative efforts are required to achieve clarity for issues and concerns. We must reconcile hostility and misunderstanding among the various publics to respond to the competing voices that dim the message of the gifted and talented population. Our quest for excellence should allow for discourse to consolidate splinter groups. We are pragmatic enough to realize there are serious budgetary considerations in these financially overburdened times. However, there is a greater need to garner financial resources to convene a national group, or a consortium in every region of the country to address these issues with us; to encourage staff development; to improve diagnostic and prescriptive teaching without the heavy underpinnings associated with many individual education plans.

A national effort would create an understanding that the gifted child sees the world in a different way from most of us. Together, we could find a way to convert seemingly impossible goals to a concept that as a nation we cannot survive educational neglect. Basic skills competency testing should be a starter point on the way to the zenith

of the learning hierarchy.

We want excellence in education for the gifted and talented, not unlike our wish for excellence in education for all children. Education that would be certain that all children receive from their personal and school environments, all the tools they require to become fulfilled persons -- on their way to achieving self-actualization as adults.

"Excellence is forever ...." (Abigail Addams).

Thank you. (Applause.)

Commissioner BAKER. And now, Ms. Patricia O'Connell, to speak on behalf of the Council of State Directors for programs for the gifted.

Ms. PATRICIA O'CONNELL. Good afternoon. I represent an organization of bureaucrats, which is appropriate for bringing up the rear here, as far as the formal presentations. The organization that I am representing here is, I think, the link between what is happening on the local district level and a lot of the national concerns which you have heard about today. I represent an organization which is very diverse, and I think that the message you have gotten today is that the states around the country are varied in the ways that they are dealing with gifted and talented kids. Some states have mandated services for gifted and talented children to use; other states have yet to see the light. So that each of the state directors represents a different philosophy, a different approach; yet, out of this diversity, I think we have managed, just lately, to achieve a kind of consensus about what we think the federal presence should be in gifted education.

So, my remarks will be very specific and very pedestrian, in a way, because I am going to be talking about the kinds of things that would really

assist us at the state level to really carry out the goals, the ideals, the wonderful ideas that we have heard about today.

Even in its heyday, the federal government only spent a few million dollars on gifted and talented education. More than 15 states spent more than that five years ago. The states have taken a strong position on this, for the most part. So, it is out of that that I will speak.

Most of this has been said before, but I would just like to reemphasize it or state it again.

What we would like to see is, first of all, that there be a federal presence. We have seen that that federal presence gives credence to what we are doing in our state and, if we say that this is a national purpose, developed by people at the national level, as my Commissioner says, it makes a difference when we go to the districts and go to the legislatures and say, "This is something that other people find credible and something that we can import, too."

So that we strongly urge that federal presence.

We would like to see four things. One

thing is that we need to have some process of ongoing communication, some way that we as practitioners and as people that are developing State-level policy can find out what is happening both in education in other states and, also, outside of children's education.

I am very concerned that we are cut off from people in subject areas. I am very concerned that we are not meeting with scholars who are doing research in child development, who are doing research in training research, or in history or in the sciences. We in education have gotten ourselves into kind of a skills development block, if I may use that word. We need to have a broader conception of what we are talking about, particularly when we talk about gifted education. I think it is fundamentally important that we have an opportunity to do that. It seems to me that the Federal Government should commit more money toward the kinds of things which will help us as practitioners translate some of the things that are happening throughout the fields of knowledge to public schools. And I think that is a very important point.

This is not a nation of city-states. We are a nation that has a general goal for education and I think, without this communication, we are in a

dire situation. We don't have that, and that is why you se us fumbling, in many cases, trying to figure out what is best to do for these kids.

Second, research. It has been mentioned time and again -- I think it was Socrates who said that, in the land of the blind, the one-eyed man was king. We have a lot of one-eyed men, I am afraid, trying to open their other eye, and I think we need help with that.

I don't mean pedantic research or esoteric research, or research which looks at how horrific the state of the art is. I think we need to look at a positive way for those tools to look at curriculums, as was mentioned again, but it is really important that we look at the subject matter to teach the kids, not just the tools or the process we use in teaching them.

We need to look at what we know about educating people. We need to look at prodigy studies. We need to look at identification of disadvantaged kids. We don't know enough about them.

I think that the field wants very much to do what is right, but we don't have those tools, as Dr. Gallagher mentioned.

What are our standards? Commissioner Marston said, "How do you evaluate a program?"

I would like to submit to you, how can you evaluate, when you don't know what the goal is? And I think that a lot of people are looking for what is the goal, and I hope that is the charge that you have here and will help us formulate what a national purpose and what a national goal ought to be. We definitely would like to do that.

As a practical matter, I don't think that that needs to add on a tremendous Federal bureaucracy. I think that these things can be done through existing organizations. We can look at curriculum through the National Endowment for the Humanities. We can look at the visual and performing arts through the National Endowment for the Arts. We can look at research through the National Institute for Education. We can look at kids in the vocational area through our services in vocational education, and I feel real strongly about that.

It doesn't need to be additional bureaucracy, but additional funding through existing organizations.

This does two things: One, it streamlines

the cost, and it also ties those efforts where they should be, and that is, firmly in the subject area or in the curriculum area where they belong.

We are talking about a small portion of children in a larger spectrum, and that is where they belong.

We think, however, that it should be additional money to those institutions which think they can impact upon these areas which they could address for these very concerns. We need to know what those standards are. Research is the only vehicle there is for doing it, and it has to be done on the national level.

Third, we need to have professional development and teacher training. I am not talking and suggesting the usual idea that we have to teacher train. I am talking about educating regular educators. I am talking about educators in their schools developing systems for support, so that schools as a whole can understand what gifted and talented education is about. It is nice to have trained specialists. It is wonderful to have those individuals who go away and learn and then return, but I think, more importantly, we have to look at a general way in which we can

establish teacher training in the broader sense.

I also think we need to get away, although it is important, from the skills focus that we have been working with gifted children. The teachers of Maine and, I am sure, all over the country, are an aging population. They have been out of the university and an academic setting, most of them, for a long time. They need opportunities for intellectual renewal themselves. We have seen remarkable things happen with our teachers.

We are asking them to treat gifted kids in a kind of sterile environment rather than instill feeling that kind of passion for knowledge that we are trying to encourage in the kids.

How can we set up opportunities for teachers? They cannot communicate that to kids unless they have felt it themselves. I would hope that a teacher training effort would build on subject matter, would build on skills as a part of subject matter. Most teachers would relish opportunities like that, and I would hope that, as a part of gifted education, we could build on giving teachers knowledge in content areas and, also, skills in those areas, a thought process of intellectual renewal as well as

classroom management.

Fourth, and last, -- it has been mentioned before that special programs and summer programs are of value. You have seen it from research on the part of adults, it has been mentioned by the MIT study, and by the testimony from students read to you.

It is very important, in Maine and in other rural areas, these kids don't have opportunities to be with other mentors; they are just not around. They have to be brought physically together in order to have that kind of sustained experience. I am sure it is the same thing in suburban and urban areas as well.

The States are willing to do that, -- many States are taking on this responsibility -- but it is limited in the numbers of kids.

If the Federal Government could share with the local districts and the States through some sort of incentive funding for summer programs, -- and this, again, could be done through the existing bureaucracy in Washington; it doesn't need to be a separate program. But those kinds of opportunities can do what public schools just don't have the capacity to do at this time.

It is not the fault of the public schools, but the teacher-mentor persons that have been described to you are not, generally, in the public schools, or, at least, they are not in Maine. Some of them are, but not enough to present the kind of sustained, intensive, academic and intellectual experience that we hope for these children.

So, those are my four simple requests. One is for a system of communication among the states. The second is for research to help us do what we hope to do better. The third is for teacher training and professional development of mentor models, people that are in the field at the moment, and fourth is some way in which we can provide special and summer programs for these kids outside the regular school program.

If you have any specific questions about what is going on in the states or if you wish to receive some information, I would be happy to prepare a proposal for you. If you have any particular questions that you would like to have the State Directors answer, we will be happy to respond. Thank you.

Commissioner BAKER. Thank you, Ms. O'Connell,

and we shall heed your invitation to follow on.

Testimony from the Public About Examples of Excellence in Education

Group I

Commissioner BAKER. We now come to the important time of public input into our hearing as well. We have sensed the empathy of this audience and we are anxious to follow it further along the lines our colleagues have just been outlining.

(A pause.)

Commissioner BAKER. We will ask Ms. Virginia Ehrlich to begin. Please use this microphone and address it with vigor.

Ms. VIRGINIA EHRLICH. I am Virginia Ehrlich. I was formerly Director of Gifted Child Studies in the New York City public schools, created the Astor program, which will be referred to later, for young gifted children, and I am associated with Columbia University Teachers' College.

I will not speak about other topics that I think are very important and need further comment. I will definitely be sending you some materials.

However, I do want to speak on one point

that was not picked up, -- that is, an aspect of it that was not discussed earlier.

It seems to me that, instead of withdrawing support for the development of appropriate curricula for all grade levels, the government should undertake a coordinated program designed to stimulate changes in curricula at all levels and in the most critical areas.

The inadequacy of curricula at elementary levels for stretching the minds of gifted children is appalling. This lack is further aggravated by the very limited understanding of what gifted young children, ages 4 to 8, are truly capable of doing.

The development of appropriate curricula at this and higher levels requires the cooperation of many skilled persons from a variety of sources, including business, industry, government agencies, institutions of higher learning, teacners experienced with children of all ages, and so forth.

And, of course, it can be done, and I shall be sending you some evidence of the fact that it was done.

Some of the current shortages in trained personnel for the highly technical and complex

industries of today are due in part to the neglect of gifted children during their early childhood, back in the late fifties and early sixties, with the consequent loss of their interest and talents as they dropped out, either physically or psychologically, from school systems that refused to recognize their existence.

A second cause of present shortages is the lack of foresight and improper guidance of students into fields of short-lived or limited utility. Thus, we have doctorates who cannot find work in their own fields, are ill-prepared to switch to other high-caliber jobs, and are considered an employment risk because they are over-qualified in education, if not in specific training.

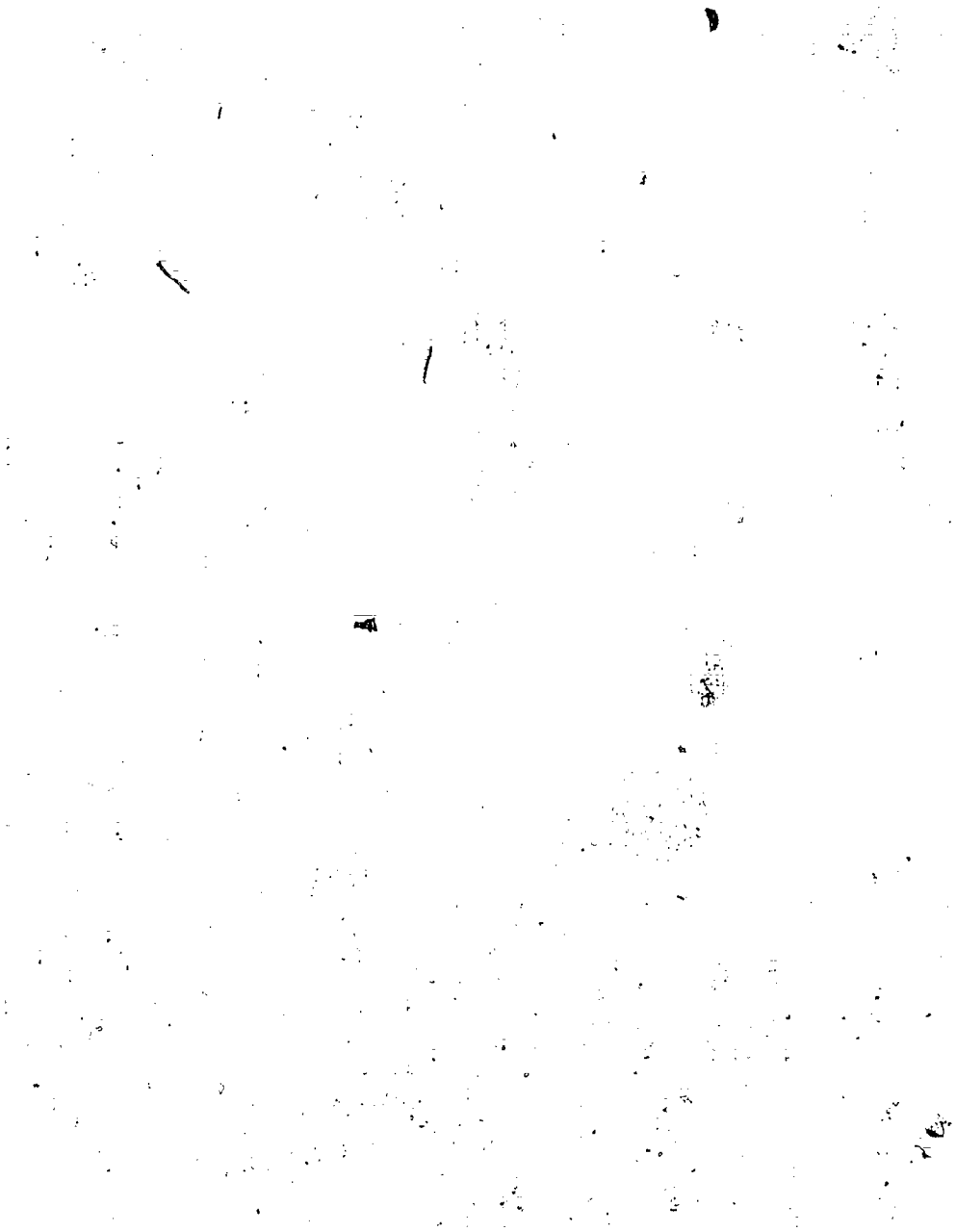
Our Department of Education at the Federal level should be guided by the phrase in the Preamble to our Constitution, "to promote the common welfare," and consider construing its role in that light. It should consult with all aspects of our government, executive, legislative, and judicial, and all other departmental agencies, (a) to determine what our national needs and priorities may be, not only immediately, but also ten or twenty years hence,

when today's children will have joined the work force, and (b) to establish those goals of education that will promote the common welfare while satisfying individual needs; (c) to recommend a system of grants, fellowships, and special awards to those who can fulfill the specified goals. These should include encouragements for educational processes, programs, research and development techniques that are clearly related to specific goals and, when applied to the intellectually gifted, recognize the necessity of beginning their education from early childhood in a continuous planned progression from kindergarten through graduate school.

For those who are expected to perform at high levels of complexity and abstraction, the most crucial years are not in college or graduate school, but during the earliest years.

Our Government's role is to reward such excellence and to encourage its manifestation.

Too much of the education of the gifted has been directed to achievement which merely reflects what the gifted student can do, with or without the intervention of a teacher, possibly even in spite of the teaching. This leads to performance which is



mediocre and far from excellent, in spite of the technical superiority of a student's grades or test results over their age peers.

What is needed is a standard of performance that accurately reflects the true capacities of the intellectually gifted. We need to set standards that will demand their best efforts, instead of lowering standards, devitalizing curricula, and diluting the essence of knowledge.

We must demand scholarship, thoroughness, precision, accuracy, and, above all, integrity of performance. From each student, we must expect a need and desire to perform at his or her best level and a repugnance for laziness of thought or performance.

In research, we must require that the standardized tests by which the performance and abilities of students are so frequently measured be calibrated with greater precision at the upper extreme, so that we can obtain truer measures of pupil progress and accomplishment among the gifted.

For this, government-sponsored research and development funds are absolutely essential.

And I shall be very glad to send you additional materials and other comments that I have

on the education of the gifted, but I think I am close to my four minutes.

Commissioner BAKER. Thank you, Ms. Ehrlich.

Ms. Gloria Duclos is next. We remind ourselves that we are very frustrated at the time limitations we have, and we would like to hear everything that can be forwarded. We would appreciate it if everyone would be considerate of the time of the others, the other members of the conference.

Ms. GLORIA SHAW DUCLOS. Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, I will talk very quickly.

I represent the University of Maine system, which last summer sponsored a two-week Summer Institute for 50 gifted and talented high school seniors from throughout the State of Maine. The Institute, which will be repeated in the summer of 1983, is located at the University of Southern Maine, one of the seven campuses which comprise the University of Maine system. The students live in a dormitory on the Gorham campus of the university for the entire two weeks.

The core of the Summer Institute is an interdisciplinary course regularly offered to freshmen at USM, entitled, "Three Crises in Western Culture:

Civilization on Trial." It is taught by five faculty members: two philosophers (who argue incessantly), a physicist, an historian, and myself, a classicist. We use the pedogogical device of a trial to focus upon three critical turning points in the history of western civilization: the trial of Socrates in 399 B.C., the trial of Galileo in 1633, and Franz Kafka's novel, "The Trial," written in 1915-16. The readings in each of the three units of the course range broadly, from Plato and Greek Socratic, Greek tragedy and Thucydides, Thomas Kuhn's "The Copernican Revolution" and Langford's "Galileo, Science and the Church," to Sigmund Freud, Karl Schorske, and readings on Mark Planck. The approach is interdisciplinary; we examine the ramifications of each trial in the areas of philosophy, science, history, literature and art. The format is varied: lectures, small discussion groups, panels, a Planetarium show, and dramatizations.

Our aim in the summer institute is to offer the students not only "total immersion" in an academically rigorous program, but also a variety of enriching experiences, and to this end we program guest lectures, films, concerts, dinners, workshops, and dances, to complement the historical periods under study. In addition to the obligatory lobster bake at the seashore, a high point of the institute is an all-day trip to

Boston, to tour the Museum of Science and the Museum of Fine Arts, eliciting, incidentally, a charming comment from one of the students whose hometown is located in far northern Maine: "I have been exposed to so much culture that they won't recognize me when I get home to Madawaska!"

The students, we find, profit about as much from the interaction and socialization with each other as they do from the exposure to a university level course and the free interchange of ideas with faculty. This is especially important in a state such as Maine, where gifted and talented students often find themselves isolated and alone in their small schools and rural areas. Another of our students expressed eloquently and poignantly why such programs for gifted and talented students are so very necessary:

"It is imperative that this form of alternative education exist for high school students who are frustrated at attacking the wall of apathy which surrounds their daily lives. Reactionary high schools, parents frightened of their offsprings' tangents and peers' reluctance to stand freely all play their ludicrouse roles in repressing young adults

who need to see, feel, taste and hear the complexities of life. Here we have joined in a beautiful and noble effort to understand culture and ourselves." Thank you.

Commissioner BAKER. Thank you, Ms. Duclos. We hear next Anton Lyzee.

Mr. ANTON LYZEE. My background is with the University of Chicago Laboratory School, Illinois Lab School, the University of Illinois' Curriculum Laboratory, the Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation, and currently Coordinator for Special Curriculum Development in Londonderry, New Hampshire.

I have some negative things to say. John Felgeson, President of NAGC, sometimes refers to the gifted education movement as GEM, and I am going to suggest to you that the Federal Government disassociate itself or either downplay or abandon its relation to the GEM movement. I will suggest an alternative that we can call Spic and Span.

I just organized my remarks around three quotations. First, from Santayana, "Those ignorant of history are bound to repeat its mistakes."

I think if you were to review the MSSP

yearbooks in the twenties, in the fifties, and the one in '79, on gifted education, you would have a pretty good summary of what you have heard today.

I think we don't do it from our history. Harry Brody said that educators are the worst offenders in showing no respect for the history of their discipline, and I agree with that.

I would like to point out, I think, an outstanding work of evaluation that was done at CRCY, a work of the curriculum of the Illinois Gifted Program, by Ernie Howes, called "The Politics of Innovation", which was mentioned at the Marlin Reports hearings, and I would suggest that everyone read that.

Another quotation, from T.S. Eliot, "Between the idea and the reality lies the shadow." That is from "The Hollow Man", which was written in the twenties.

I think that most people in school districts, teachers, administrators, see the people who have promoted the gifted education movement, the GEM movement, as hollow men, hollow people, people who have a lot of high ideals, but offer them no support or ideas of how to implement them on the local level.

I suggest that the shadow is the politics

of the local school district that Ernie Howes refers to, and I refer you to that.

Another quotation, from Richard Hurd, "It is easier to move a cemetery than to change the curriculum."

I would suggest that the kind of catalyst, the national catalyst that Dr. Gallagher talked about, the kind of individual focus on problems and different kinds of subject matter that Dr. Feldman talked about, can be hitched to this thing that I will call Spic and Span. And I think the two examples I will just mention, I think the Johns Hopkins attempt at the national talent search is an excellent attempt to identify and provide a national foundation for local districts to justify their local support of programs.

I would like to suggest that Olympics of Mind that came out of the New Jersey gifted program is another national program that provides a model that, once it gets into a district, can create local support for gifted programming that goes beyond the Olympics of the Mind, and I think it allows students to get a chance to deal with problems in a variety of areas.

Now, the Spic and Span thing that I just

thought up is going to, hopefully, try to clean up the mess of the last fifty years, but what I would have it stand for is Special Problems Inspiring Commitments to Knowledge, and the Span would mean that it would span from pre-school to college. And these kinds of problems would be created by experts in the field. They would be open-ended problems like the Olympics of the Mind, and they would allow participation at local districts and encourage all kinds of creative involvement.

The Span issue in it is, again, to span all areas of the curriculum, span all areas of the age span.

Finally, I would like to think, if Socrates were on trial here, I think he would identify looking over the last fifty years of the gifted education movement, the GEM movement. He would see people in the College of Education as the modern counterparts of sophists. I would suggest that you want to go to people with subject matter knowledge in the various disciplines to get advice on how to create these problems for Spic and Span. Thank you.

Commissioner BAKER. Thank you. I think it was clear that you, in pointing out needs, were still

supporting warmly the total program, a very good combination.

Miss Rhoda Spear.

Miss RHODA SPEAR. I would like to begin by saying that I came here with a prepared script, which is in my briefcase. I would prefer to use what remains of our time to share some concerns with you.

My current position is Coordinator of Gifted Programs for the City of New Haven in Connecticut. I hesitate to use the words, New Haven, here because of Yale's proximity, but please forgive me in these hallowed halls.

Very simply, I would like to discuss with you one word. The one word is the word "ambivalent". If I had to describe the state of New Haven's programs currently, I think the best word possible would be the word "ambivalent."

We are very fortunate. We are fortunate in having, probably, what I consider to be the best consultant in gifted education in any state that I have traveled, and that is Bill Vassar, who has provided just so much support and guidance.

We are very fortunate in having a committed Superintendent of Schools. I think both of

those ingredients are crucial.

In addition to that, we are fortunate in having a committed Board of Education, that is, as committed as they can be with fiscal constraints.

In addition, we are fortunate to have committed community people. We are fortunate to have the expertise on consultant services, right from the very inception of our gifted program, of Mary Hunter Wolfe and people like Mary Hunter Wolfe.

We are very fortunate to have community mentors who are very committed. We are very fortunate to be in a university environment, where we draw upon not only Yale in a number of ways, but also both the community colleges, state teachers' colleges, and every available resource.

We are very fortunate in that, this year, we are serving 632 youngsters, but that is not enough. It cannot begin to be enough for a city or a city like New Haven.

We are also very fortunate in having committed staff who are willing to, as I put it, stretch the elastic as far as the elastic will possibly go.

We are also very fortunate in having as

our ultimate designed purpose a comprehensive gifted program, and I mean comprehensive, both traveling grade levels from four through twelve, with some early programming, -- not enough -- but also a comprehensive program in its recognition of the uncovering of the potentially gifted youngsters. And Alex Baldwin, earlier this morning, addressed that, and I have heard that as an ongoing concern. But not enough of our youngsters are being programmed for, and that is the unfortunate portion of New Haven's lot, cities' lots, rural communities' lots, and even some suburban communities.

Very simply, in history, let me just trace the kinds of impact that fiscal constraints have had upon a system that is committed to a comprehensive gifted program.

Two years ago, we had 100 per cent more staff than we currently have this year and, again, that was because of, very simply, a $6 million budget cut, -- not in our budget, but in the education budget -- and this is what cities and towns are faced with. Consequently, I request, in the remaining 180 seconds, the following of this Commission:

Number one, a passionated commitment to

comprehensive gifted programming for students across this country; secondly, a very strong commitment to cities; thirdly, and perhaps most prevalently, at least a plea for funding so that we can disseminate what have been model programs in this country.

I hear the final buzzer. I can go on, but let me end with a quote from Charles Dickens, which is, very simply, -- I am paraphrasing it -- it is the best of times. Please don't let it be the worst of times.

Commissioner BAKER. Thank you very much. Judith Greunbaum.

Ms. JUDITH GREUNBAUM. Ladies and gentlemen, Commissioners:

I represent Project Excel, a project at Southeastern Massachusetts University. My title is Dissemination Coordinator.

Project Excel at Southeastern Massachusetts University is an enrichment program which provides a bridge into higher education for gifted and talented high school students. The curriculum is designed to introduce high potential tenth and eleventh graders to the larger realm of creative intellect, artistic endeavor, and social consciousness. This fall, the

project will begin its third year of operation. It is now a proven model which has successfully served over 150 students from twelve high schools in the Southeastern Massachusetts area.

Excel does not offer the participants advanced work in specialized areas. The emphasis is not on developing a particular narrow skill or on rote learning. Rather, Excel is based on the idea that education is a process of discovery.

The program is designed to encourage analysis of conflicting information and the integration of scientific, aesthetic and moral concepts. It is through the use of critical intellectual processes that great discoveries and innovations are made in all fields of human endeavor, in the arts and sciences, and in the social sciences and within the humanities.

Recently, we have been fortunate to have been awarded a grant from FIPSE, the Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education. We will, within the next two years, disseminate the model to twelve campuses within the Northeast. We hope to reach 800 students from 120 to 144 cooperating high schools.

Excel establishes early integration of

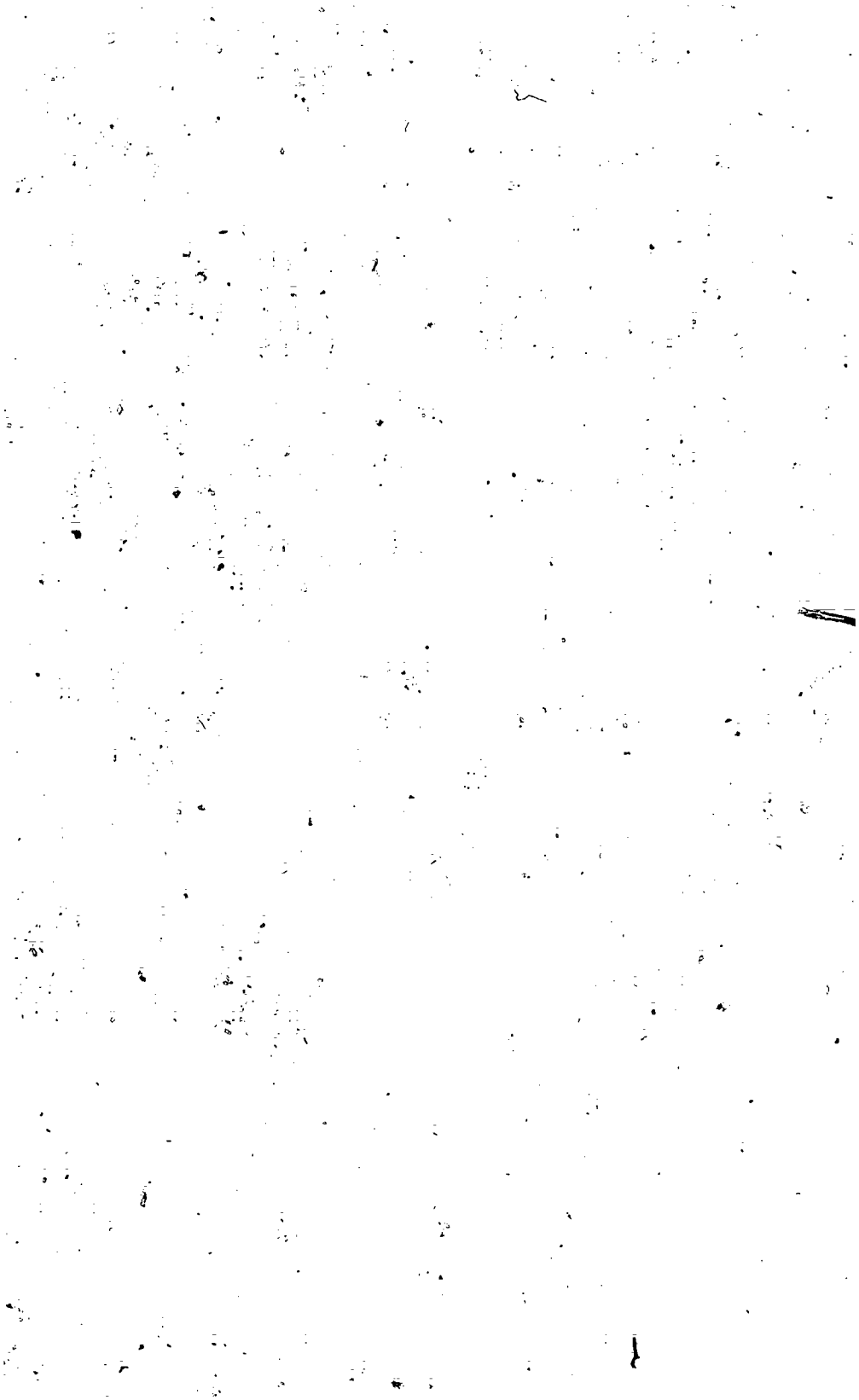
the most promising students into the intellectual life and value conflicts of universities through weekly on-campus afternoon sessions, thereby meeting the needs of the especially talented.

Last year, the theme for Excel was Commitment to Life; this year, the Discovery of Talent.

An example of one lecture which was just last week was Lisa Thornsen, a young woman of 25 years of age who, having been committed to the area of singing and acting her entire life, four years ago, was faced with the conflict of being completely confined to a wheelchair.

The high school students involved in our program met her, talked with her, and discussed with her the agony of rediscovering her talent, overcoming the disability, and recommitting herself within herself to that gift and forging ahead. And I would say that it was one of the most interesting and stimulating discussions that the high school students have had.

We provide a linkage across institutional boundaries, utilizing the personnel and plant each in a cost-effective way, fulfilling the community service mission of the university to the cooperating high



schools and participating students.

We are fiscally self-sufficient, a funding pattern which helps guarantee continuity and stability in a variety of institutional settings.

We stimulate a high level of interest in participants, in areas of high schools, and at colleges and universities.

I am going to close now. What I would like to offer and what my job is, that, throughout the Northeast, we would like to help to establish this model within other colleges. I personally believe that it is important because it develops a reciprocal link between public school education and the university within each area, and that is a role that I think we all have to begin to work on, to begin to develop a hierarchy in learning, and, as an art educator, I am delighted with the fact that this particular model emphasizes creative artistic endeavor as well as the intellectual side of learning.

It is the best that we can offer students in providing a way of drawing out the essence of learning and then, in that way, in developing within each person, within each individual, the spirit of discovery. Thank you.

Commissioner BAKER. Thank you, Ms. Greunbaum.

Commissioner MARSTON. Just one question, please. It is an afternoon program? It is not a residential program?

Ms. GREUNBAUM. That is true. It is based on the academic year of the university, and it is one afternoon per week. And, if you want more information, I will have it.

Commissioner BAKER. Thank you again. Vincent Hawes.

Mr. VINCENT HAWES. Members of the Commission, and the audience:

My name is Dr. Vincent Hawes. I am Professor of Education at Salem State College in Historic Salem on the North Shore of Massachusetts, a town situated next to the Town of Beverly that I will discuss today because it is in that town, with its gifted program that is alive at Salem State College, that I wish to give you some information.

That town, incidentally, is the home, it alleges, at least, of the birthplace of the United States Navy, and it also is the home of the Cabots and the Lodges, whose discourse, of course, is limited to people other than this group.

In seeking to link college and community programs and the evaluation of them, I began, several years ago, and have completed a study on the progress of students in a program for the gifted in the neighboring town of Beverly called EEC, Educational Enrichment Center.

By classic definition, this is a program which is principally enrichment. It follows the model of the pullout style in which youngsters spend one day a week in a center for acceleration and enrichment and have the rest of the time in their regular classes.

I will summarize quickly a few of the principal findings of the study, which concerned the impressions and attitudes that children had of themselves, after having had the experience of this new program transferring them from the regular curriculum and exposure.

The first step of the development of this was the sensitizing of a number of the teachers to the needs of gifted youngsters, both informing them and making them more cognizant of what occurs in the mind of a gifted child. The sensitizing followed a classic formula accepted and prepared by most

psychologists, and it was one in which we leaned heavily, to be perfectly candid, on the models used in the women's movement, and I felt I had to; being the father of three daughters, I didn't dare but concur with what was proposed.

The style led to the survey. The survey dealt with 152 children, all of whom I interviewed personally, and data was obtained from them as well as from their parents and every sub-group in the administration of the program -- teachers, parents of children within the program, parents outside of the program.

The distribution of students was from Grades 4 through 8, somewhat younger than has been generally discussed here today, but I think noteworthy.

We sought to find out, or I did, the extent to which the students are being enriched in this program, and whether the stated objectives brilliantly conceived and exquisitely expressed, actually had been achieved.

We are pleased to say, at the end of the study, that we had this -- and I would just cite the results, since there are many, and statistics, late

There was one dissenter, as there should be, I suppose, and he said, "I am in it because my mother says I have to be."

But the other children overwhelmingly showed, 87.5 per cent, that they were changed and changed for the better because of the effort by college and community to work jointly together. Thank you.

Commissioner BAKER. Thank you. We now come to Dorothy Moser.

Ms. DOROTHY MOSER.. Commissioners, ladies and gentlemen:

I am happy to be here to make a statement for the Mortar Board, Incorporated, today. Mortar Board, for those of you who may not know, is a National Senior Honor Society, founded in 1918, with over 180 chapters committed to three basic principles scholarship, leadership and service.

Our organization has a reputation for supporting and encouraging excellence on college and university campuses throughout the nation.

It has been said several times today, by various speakers, that mentors, model teachers, stimulating teachers, are needed on an elementary and

secondary level as essential elements in the process of assisting our gifted and talented children and youth to realize their full potential. The members of Mortar Board, who have been recognized for excellence, could provide the type of stimulating teacher to which we refer; but where is the incentive? Fewer and fewer of our college graduates consider teaching to be a viable occupation. As the Federal Government continues to cut back on financial assistance, our college students are forced to incur more and more debt, and the realization that these debts must be repaid causes them to prepare for occupations which have potential for producing lucrative incomes.

In addition, the teaching profession, in many respects, has lost its time-honored place in society. We must be concerned with returning to the educational arena the prestige and status which was once afforded those in the teaching profession in order for us to attract the brilliant minds needed to produce excellence.

We must believe that our greatest national resource is human capital. Existing programs which help the young and the poor to reach for higher

standards of educational excellence must be preserved. The priorities set by the Federal Government must reflect the need for growth of the excellent in our human resources. America's future depends on it. Thank you.

Commissioner BAKER. Thank you. Ms. Wendy Marks.

Ms. WENDY MARKS. Members of the Commission: I came here today not to give you any specific examples of projects or schools, but because I have within me a need to say something to you.

I continue to realize that I had, when I went through school, a differentiated educational opportunity before it was popular to offer it, and I have come to realize that all children don't get the opportunity that I had. What it cost me was to stand up and speak for what I believe in.

I am president of a very active parent advocacy group in Chelmsford, Massachusetts, and, after three years of very diligent work, we finally arrived at the implementation of a local gifted and talented program in our public school system and, I might add, at a time of financial stress here in Massachusetts.

I am also a member of the State Advocacy

Group and I am personally involved in the effort to implement legislation to maintain the Office of Gifted and Talented at the state level.

But what I really came here today for was because I am attempting to provide quality parenting to five sons, three of whom fall into the category we are discussing today.

Ms. Cox referred to the important of a supportive home environment. I am particularly concerned about the most efficient use of parental time and energy. I think you became increasingly aware today that gifted children are a minority. It should follow that parents of gifted children are also a minority.

Keeping that fact in mind, I would urge this Commission to recommend not only Federal monies to be spent on research and development, and teacher in-service, but also to establish that committed Federal office of gifted and talented, which can then oversee the implementation and continuity of quality programs across the nation.

In this way, parent advocates could spend less time trying to achieve the basic rights of their children to equal educational opportunity and spend

more time and energy in providing direct individual support to their children and to their children's educators. I feel that we would all benefit greatly from such a concerted effort to form a positive coalition between the Federal, the State, and the local forces. Thank you.

Commissioner MARSTON. Thank you very much, Mrs. Marks. If any more energy is expended from the gifted parents across this country, we are going to have double gifted students. Mr. James DeLisle.

Mr. JAMES DeLISLE. My name is Jim DeLisle, and I am from the University of Connecticut, where I am on the faculty of the School of Education, and also come to you today especially as a counselor of gifted children and their parents.

I think I am in a unique position, which is to say that I am the last person on the last panel today.

The National Commission on Excellence in Education is aptly named, because of the panel members and the participants I have heard today. I hope that I can add just a little bit.

As I said, I do come to you as a counselor, today, of gifted children. Much of what I have heard

today has been on what we can do to enhance children's intellect, what we can do with them in school to make them progress academically, and that is all well and good. But I think that that is only half the job, unless we look inside the child at the social and emotional components of giftedness.

Let me refer you then, very briefly, to four areas that I think we need to concern ourselves with -- you can do that -- by this Commission.

The first one is realizing the nature and significance of intellectual differences. It seems that, sometimes, we identify gifted children, we tell the parents who they are, we tell the teachers who they are, but we don't tell the kids. The kids, themselves, wonder what giftedness means, "Why am I being taken out of a classroom? How come I can read at six and nobody else can," different items that we don't talk about with the children, which eventually can lead to questions, issues, and then eventually problems, if we don't take heed.

My research, by the way, on this comes from gifted children, themselves. I am, right now, compiling a book for a New York publisher, two-thirds of which is all comments by gifted children on being

bright. So far, I have over 1500 comments, so I use them as my basic research.

The second, the social-emotional area, is something that we have rarely talked about all day, which is curriculum. We have talked about textbooks and how the children already know what is in the textbooks before they are taught, and I am reminded of a quote by Woody Allen who, when discussing everyday occurrenees, said, "Ninety per cent of life is just showing up."

Well, with kids, who, in school, know the curriculum, know what is going on, I think that 80 per cent of their life, or 60 per cent, or some too-high percentage is just showing up.

The curriculum, to me, is the most important, available, yet untapped influence on social and emotional development of bright kids. If we deal with that, we are not going to have a lot of the other issues of boredom and underachievement and tons of other things which seem to hurt bright kids.

In addition to that and as an opposite correlary, if you will, we have to leave room for the children who, despite their abilities, actively decide, "No, I do not want enrichment at this point in time."

One of the children, actually, a young man, who was in a gifted program and didn't want to be, said this. He said, "The only thing worse than being denied opportunities is being forced to take them." We have to listen to the children, if they are saying "No, not right now, thank you."

The third issue is that of peers and the whole concept of peers and peerness. As Adults, we have different sets of peers, socially, intellectually, whatever; chronologically, also. Gifted children have the same. However, sometimes, they don't know that it is okay to be in first grade and to want to be with fourth graders because they can read as they do. They don't know that that is okay and maybe they start feeling "There is something wrong with me because, if there wasn't something wrong, I wouldn't have these desires."

We have to look at the concepts of peerness and age mates, and we have to discuss these with children, to let them know that it is okay to have both.

And lastly is the area of career counseling, and I will tell you a story about this from my own life.

I was brought up in Lawrence, Mass., about 20 miles from here, which Rand McNally rated as the worst city in the country in which to be raised. I have some question about that. But I went to a very good private high school in Lawrence. I was a straight A student, editor of the yearbook, the top 10 per cent of the class, and, in my four years there, never once saw a guidance counselor. It was assumed that I knew what I wanted to be, because I was a straight A student. It was assumed that I knew where I wanted to go in life. The guidance counselor was for students who were getting C's and D's and, therefore, I never saw a guidance counselor, which meant, when I had to come around to choosing colleges, I took out Baron's Catalogue and picked a letter of the alphabet, H, and I applied to three schools -- this one, Harvard, Hillsdale in Michigan and Hendricks. Harvard said No; the other two said Yes, and I picked Michigan because I liked the shape of the state and they sold cars.

That is not career guidance for the gifted. We have to think of career guidance in terms of bright children as well as those who are not so bright.

I guess that is all I wanted to say. Those are four distinct issues, and I don't exactly know what you are going to do with them. But whatever you do, whatever support you are going to give us in this field, financially or otherwise, please consider that there is more to a gifted child than just the intellect. I have 1500 kids who will agree with you. Thank you.

Commissioner MARSTON. Thank you very much. Is there anyone else who desires to say something?

(No response.)

Commissioner MARSTON. If not, on behalf of the Commission, we thank you, Mr. Wallace, myself, Peter Gerber, who is sitting beside me now, for your patience, your deliberations, your kindnesses, and your outstanding thoughts.

When we first met as a National Commission, Dr. Stephen Daily from this distinguished college came to see us and talked to us about values. And one of the things that he said was, "Boards who understand issues dispense with them, and those things that boards do not understand they discuss among themselves."

I think, today, we have discussed among

ourselves, hopefully, for a clearer understanding for the American public on what really is needed for the gifted child.

Our records will stay open until the 15th of November. We urge you, if you would like, to send us your thoughts, your ideas, any additional information or exemplary programs which you would like to have included.

Thank you very much for coming today.

(The hearing was thereupon adjourned at 5:00 o'clock p.m.)

Testimony from the Public about Examples of Excellence in Education

Group II

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Commissioner HOLTON. Ladies and gentlemen, we have a large number of potential testifiers and a short amount of time. Therefore, let me make a proposal to you. We are roughly splitting it into four-minute segments, and these should be very succinct statements. Let me ask you to start with your last paragraph and then go back, if you have time, to the introductory material, by which I mean, if you had just a few moments of Mr. Reagan's time, so to speak, what is it that you really want to tell him, and then, afterwards, tell me all the rest, if there is time left over.

Forgive me for being that frank, but I think that would be a useful way to do it.

Now, the first one to speak, I believe, is Naomi Zymelman. I believe that we are wired up in some manner.

Ms. NAOMI ZYMELMAN. It is going to be difficult to start reading my last paragraph because all it says is that I am a student.

Commissioner HOLTON. Oh, well, it was my suggestion, and you don't have to absolutely follow it.

Ms. ZYMELMAN. I am an eleventh grade student attending a small school in Maryland called the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School of Greater Washington. I have been involved in two summer programs sponsored by the Maryland Center for the Gifted and Talented and have been labeled as a gifted student, and I would like to make a presentation from that point of view.

I have interviewed several other gifted students from my school, two of whom I should mention and I quote in my brief essay here attended the Hopkins program. In doing so, I have found that many of their experiences mirror my own, and our views of programs for the gifted are strikingly similar.

We all do our best work and are happiest when we are together in accelerated classes. We applaud the existence of special gifted groups, with one voice.

One reason for our enthusiasm is that remaining in a normal classroom situation can be uncomfortable.

Many of the students that I have interviewed

felt that they were being held back in their classes. One student said that his boredom resulted in his flunking. Another said that, once he became serious about his studies, he found his classes were moving too slowly and became annoyed and impatient. He began making things difficult for his teachers, his classmates, and himself.

This kind of tension in the classroom seems to be typical. I have felt it both in teachers who have avoided me in order to give other people a chance as well as students who resented my doing well in class.

One student told me that he made some of his teachers uneasy. He said, "Teachers shouldn't be worried. They have to be made aware that their students are not a threat to them."

Commenting on the tension between peers, one student said that there is always an unspoken contest to see who can outdo his accomplishments. There is always a feeling that one student is better than another. He said that some students are bound to feel an animosity.

This painful reality is one reason why special groups can be helpful.

There are alternatives to special groups, but my friends and I feel that they are not as beneficial.

Enrichment is one. We have all been exposed to it; yet, none of us has benefitted from it.

If the gifted student is, as one boy said, one who learns more faster, then enrichment, which does nothing to increase the pace of the course, will not be of any help.

Another problem is that enrichment is time-consuming; it does not free the student from the normal classroom. Given the option of investing additional time in studying superfluous material as opposed to relaxing in an easy course, I can assure you that most people would rather not exert the extra effort.

Independent study does not pose this particular problem, but it, too, has its drawbacks. While it enables a student to move at his own pace, the student is alone. But even if this is not a problem, finding a teacher to work with the student is. As one student said, "There is no substitute for a teacher."

Special groups for gifted students enables

students and teachers to interact. This is one of the most important aspects. The atmosphere in special programs for gifted students is vibrant.

As one student said, "Once you have identified the gifted child and give him the right materials and teach him new stuff, then he will become motivated."

There is nothing better than being in an environment where the students can help each other as well as compete with one another.

When I went to the Maryland Center for the Arts to study drawing and painting, I was delighted to find that there were other people like me. We all excelled in the same areas and were, therefore, able to share similar problems. In that program, as well as in the academically oriented internships in government program that I attended this past summer, interning in the Department of Education, incidentally, each student worked on the same level and received the same amount of attention. There were no unspoken contests. There was only open, invigorating competition.

One student remarked, "I was wasting a lot of my time. I had never been in an atmosphere

like that. The competition motivated me."

I don't mean to say that this kind of atmosphere, as refreshing as it is, is enough of a reason to remove students from all normal classes. Still, motivation is the key to successful learning experience. As one boy said, "Although I think you need exposure to all kinds of people, when you need to learn, it is better to be in a challenging atmosphere."

It seems that most people enjoy, as I have, participating in a program for the gifted and talented.

Removal from a familiar situation is never easy, but if there are obstacles in a normal learning atmosphere, special attention becomes necessary.

When faced with this kind of situation, I have come to the conclusion that special groups are the most beneficial to learning.

I hope that I have made a contribution today.

Commissioner HOLTON. May I ask you to tell me in one sentence, is one of the nice things about being in a special gifted group that we hope to have

a chance to have a peer group that we talk about after class, who work together, and so forth?

Miss ZYMELMAN. For sure. If you are speaking to a non-responsive peer, it is not going to make it.

Commissioner HOLTON. May we turn to Sherry Earle, for the second.

Ms. SHERRY EARLE. My name is Sherry Earle, and I am president of the Connecticut Association for the Gifted. It is primarily an educational advocacy and support group. We have a mix of teachers and parents in our group.

My own background is working with a local advocacy group which functioned largely as a support group, and that is the aspect that I will be speaking from right now.

I do live in Connecticut and we do have marvelous programs in Connecticut, but I would like to remind the Commissioners that that is not very helpful if, in your town, for your child's age and interest, there is no program. There is the wonderful science program in Avon, but, when you live in Danbury, it isn't helpful.

I am particularly concerned that there are only pockets of excellence, that it is not a

comprehensive or systematic approach. Even in school systems where very excellent programs exist, it is quite often a particular individual, the superintendent or a strong Board member, rather than an institutional commitment; and this is something that I am very concerned with and many parents are.

We are also very concerned about the quality of the teachers that work with our students, and many of the other things that have been brought up today.

I do want to take a moment to talk about attitudes; I think that is the crucial issue. And I think that changing the question is important.

I don't think it is, "Why don't we value gifted education and put it where it belongs?" I think it is asking, why do we value athletics? What is it that lets us know we value athletics? How do we know that is important to us as a culture? And I think, from that, we can draw a correlary.

We know that the sport program is important by the numbers of people who participate in it, the amount of money which is expended on it, and the time allocated to it. These simple steps can be applied to the gifted. Instead of buying 22 helmets for a

football team, we could buy 22 micro-computers. We choose not to; we choose to buy football helmets.

Don't misunderstand me -- I am pro sports; I am not anti-sports. We do have the resources; we do not have the willingness.

I would say that, strongly and colloquially put, we need to put our money where our mouth is. If we say it is important, we have to support it with our finances.

And I think this must take the lead from the Federal level and then trickle down, right down to the PTO's and the PTA's on the local level.

I would like to see a very authoritative source put the words with it, too, that the gifted are important, and maybe we will have Presidential awards that go out to many kids, not just to Merit Scholars and those types of things that are largely unattainable; patches, even -- those kinds of things that say, "We think this is important to our culture."

Thank you.

Commissioner HOLTON. Thank you. May I ask Grey Austin to speak? Mr. Austin.

Mr. C. GREY AUSTIN. My concern is with the articulation of secondary school and college programs

for the gifted. I am University Honors Director at the Ohio State University and President of the National Collegiate Honors Council, which represents honors programs in colleges and universities in all parts of the United States.

I offer two major points for your consideration. First, educational opportunities that meet the needs of gifted and talented young people are provided at the college level, as at the elementary and secondary levels, primarily through special programs in a wide variety of institutions, rather than through selective admission to a small number of prestigious colleges. Economic constraints have narrowed the options of university choice for gifted students, while honors programs have broadened the educational options for those students in 52 per cent of America's colleges and universities. This point is exemplified by the college choice of 1981 National Merit Scholars. Of the total of 4,930 scholars, 13 per cent attended Harvard, Yale, Princeton or Stanford, while another 13 per cent attended Texas A & M, the University of Texas, Georgia Tech, Michigan State, the University of Florida, or Ohio State.

Over all, they selected more than 400 institutions, about 60 per cent private and 30 per cent public, and many that one would not recognize as prestigious.

We suggest, therefore, that public encouragement of special opportunities for the gifted and talented should extend kindergarten through college, rather than K through 12.

Our second point is an extension of the first. The process by which outstanding students sort themselves into a variety of institutions of higher education should not be left to chance. We offer three proposals for improving that process and thereby enhancing the prospect that gifted students will make appropriate college choices:

(1) The publication of a national directory of college programs for the gifted, to be made available to secondary school guidance counselors, as well as students and their parents;

(2) Financial assistance to enable and encourage pre-college students of high ability to engage in college level study through concurrent enrollment programs, special institutes and workshops, and other acceleration and enrichment options; and

(3) A series of regional institutes on education of the gifted to explore possibilities for exchange among educators and students at all levels, with special emphasis on cooperation between secondary and post-secondary levels.

These proposals are intended to capitalize on teachers already in our national educational system. They seek to increase communication between constituencies and between levels of education, and thus to provide gifted students at all levels with challenging, stimulating, and supportive learning environments.

The National Collegiate Honors Council would like to participate actively in the implementation of these proposals, which will be amplified in our written testimony. Thank you.

Commissioner HOLTON. Could I just ask you, very quickly, this directory of college programs for the gifted, could there be a national directory of all kinds of programs for the gifted, of which college and university programs would be a part?

Mr. AUSTIN. Oh, certainly.

Commissioner HOLTON. I assume, then, since your program is from kindergarten through college,

that you directory should be analogous to that.

Mr. AUSTIN. Yes.

Commissioner HOLTON. That certainly would be a great service.

Mr. AUSTIN. I think it might even be a commercial venture.

Commissioner HOLTON. You should all be reminded that your testimony should be either today in writing submitted to us or, during the next month, sent in to the National Commission on Excellence in Education in Washington. The record will be kept open, so please feel that both your present and perhaps your further supportive testimony is very welcome.

May I turn now to Sally Reis.

Ms. SALLY REIS. Good afternoon. I am currently the coordinator of a program for gifted and talented students in the northwestern part of the ~~State of~~ Connecticut. The city in which I live and work is a small, blue-collar factory city and, for the last six years, it has had a major commitment to the education of the gifted and talented.

I am here to represent the Council for Exceptional Children, the Talented and Gifted Division, and I had prepared remarks asking mainly for more

Federal funds and asking for so many people to continue the kinds of things that have happened in the past.

However, I think, in lieu of the conversation that has happened already today, it might be more apropros for me to speak today about how our program works. I think that everyone in the room recognizes that funds are needed and that we need to carry on some of the support that has happened in the past.

About six years ago, I got involved at the University of Connecticut with Joe Renzulli, mainly because I believed in his philosophy of a broadened conception of giftedness. Before my involvement in gifted education in my city, I don't think our superintendent or many of the teachers in Torrington believed that we had any gifted children in our city. I think their conception of giftedness was a very, high very/IQ conception.

In the past seven years, we have established a program for academically and artistically talented and gifted students that begins in Grade Kindergarten and it works all the way through the high school.

We identify about the top 15 per cent of

our children as being above average and, in those kids, we try to inspire and, in many ways, make the task commitment and creativity that will help their gifts to emerge in certain areas.

I could stand here or sit here today and give you numerous examples of the remarkable productivity of our children. Last year, I worked with a second grade boy named Michael Lynchek, who wrote a book on the life of Tchaikovsky, of 40 pages; it had a taped version with it. Without the opportunities presented in a program like this, that would not have happened.

About four years ago, our Board of Education got interested in expanding our program, and they called some of the kids in that have participated in the program. One of them was a young girl named Heather Jones, who had built and constructed a robot. This, again, is a program based on Renzulli's Enrichment Triad Model which I feel is the most effective way for our city, at least, and many others in Connecticut, to handle a comprehensive program, because it answers many of the questions of acceleration and enrichment that can reconcile some of the remarks made by our first panelist here.

This girl was asked about the robot she had built, was asked by a Board of Education member whether she would have done this work without the gifted program, and I think her response is so indicative of what needs to be said today. She said, "No, I wouldn't."

And, when asked, "Why not," by the Board member, she said, quite simply, "Because nobody ever asked me to before." She was in sixth grade.

I think what we need to do, not just in Connecticut, but nationally, is to take a look at the comprehensive systems that tell people, first, this is our definition; secondly, this is how we identify; and, thirdly, this is how we program. I don't think Dr. Renzulli nor myself, because he has worked very, very closely with our district, can say that ours is the only program model that has the answer, but I think it is one of the only comprehensive approaches. I think it is one of the only ones around that says, this is our definition, this is our identification, and this is what happens.

In our district, classroom teachers are involved by means of curriculum compacting so that kids can leave their classrooms for up to three and

four hours a week to work on a chosen area of their interest. Many of the hours that we spend are simply letting kids know what is available to them in terms of different areas that they may want to research and that this part of our enrichment program is equally as important as is our acceleration program within the curriculum that they go through.

So really, in just a few minutes, that is what I wanted to stress. Two years ago, we had a massive problem in our city, with a huge budget cut, and this is a city where education has not, I would say, been highly valued in the past. And, because of massive funding cuts, our gifted program, a large part of it, 90 per cent of it, was eliminated. In the two months that followed, the citizens of our community organized a protest action that resulted in a parade and a march on City Hall and, because of that, the program was reinstated.

And I would just like to tell you one of the reasons why it was reinstated. They decided to make phys ed at our high school optional, to keep the gifted program. And I think, in a blue-collar factory town, that speaks for the program's effectiveness.

Thank you very much.

Commissioner CAMPBELL. I was going to ask you, in your identification, do you also have continuous progress in this complementary program?

Ms. REIS. Yes. The kids are screened each year and teacher nominations are considered and, at the same time, achievement tests are given, so it is a continuous, on-going thing.

Commissioner HOLTON. Your comment about the march on City Hall evokes rather remarkable pictures in my mind.

Ms. REIS. We have pictures of several of them; I will send you some.

Commissioner HOLTON. Let me ask, your fraction is large, 15 per cent. That may mean that you are diluting the program for the top two, three, four or five per cent, but you are dropping your political base. The march's length would be shorter, as it were.

Ms. REIS. I think that many of the people -- first of all, our definition of "gifted" is a combination of high levels of ability. It is not just the top one or two per cent. But I also think, something I didn't have time to say, but I think something that you ought to address; something like

the Triad Model or some model like that, as Joe mentioned this morning, part of that program involves the experiences with other children who are encouraged to participate.

So, because of the emergence of our gifted program, we have been able to provide some service to all kids. We have enrichment teams in every building that service all children. So, a lot of the people that marched in that parade were not even parents of kids in that top 15 per cent, and I think that is very important.

Commissioner HOLTON. I think that you bring up a very interesting political aspect.

Betty Gilson, please.

Ms. BETTY GILSON. I am a teacher in the Brockton Public Schools, where we have had a gifted program ongoing since 1940. I have been involved in the program; this is my 17th year.

As a teacher in the gifted program, I feel very strongly, as did our first speaker, that we need these programs for the gifted youngsters. However, I would like to address myself to something different from what anyone has said so far in this hearing.

I am very concerned with identification and motivation of those children who are not achieving. In my classroom, I have seen many, many youngsters who do achieve and who achieve very well, but I feel that, at an elementary school age, you cannot determine completely who is gifted by their achievements. There are many gifted non-achievers and under-achievers, and I am concerned about them. I think some of those are not being identified for entry into the program, in any program of gifted children or talented children.

If we were able to identify them and they were put in this proper nurturing environment, then perhaps they would be achievers. There are other youngsters, albeit a small minority, who do come into a gifted program and still do not achieve as we would hope that they do.

So what we need from the Federal Government is help in identifying properly all the youngsters who would profit by a gifted and talented program. We also need help in learning how these children can be motivated. What learning modality should they have in order to bring out the giftedness that they do have and that they are not using? We want them all to realize their potential, not just the ones who come

in and do what we ask them.

I am concerned about the halo effect that so often goes into selecting children for a gifted or talented program. It was mentioned that children could be selected easily by teachers. As a teacher of long-standing, I do not agree. I do not think a classroom teacher is always a good predictor of a child's ability or a good person to select a gifted or talented child. All too often, a teacher will think that a child who does everything that is asked of him, passes in all the papers on time, neatly done, is the child who is gifted and talented.

I have heard classroom teachers say to me, "I wonder why Mary Jones or Jimmy Smith is not in that program. He or she always gets all A's." And that is not necessarily the truly gifted or talented child.

I feel very strongly that there is much we need to learn about selecting gifted children and nurturing them properly so that they will be motivated to do what they are able to do. Therefore, I feel that what we would like from the Federal Government is some things that have already been requested of you, again and again, today: Funds for research into

the problems I have raised. Then, when information is found, it should be disseminated. People all over the country should get the results of this investigation. And, when there are good demonstrations and models available, we should all be made aware of them and be able to learn from them. Thank you.

Commissioner HOLTON. Thank you very much. I have Roberta McHardy on my list.

Ms. ROBERTA McHARDY. I thought you were going to leave me off. I am the State Supervisor for Gifted Programs in Louisiana. Louisiana's commitment to education for the gifted and talented is recognized throughout the Southeast and the nation. Our State has led others in the development of teacher training for gifted programs, in development of programs for those talented in the visual and performing arts; and in the development of computer education for the gifted.

Gifted students in Louisiana receive services from pre-school through college years. Two of the 26 graduate school programs in gifted education in the country are located in Louisiana. A Master's Degree in Gifted Education is required of all teachers in public school programs.

Our State supports the team of leaders recommended by Jim Gallagher by employing a supervisor for the talented; a section chief, whose responsibility is to procure support financially and legislatively, and myself.

We are a relatively small state, not Texas or California, but we are making relatively large strides in gifted education. As a matter of fact, much of what I have heard today in the way of recommendations or ideals for gifted education is and has been in place in Louisiana for five years, and possibly some of our experiences would give you information about how these recommendations do pan out.

Currently, 14,000 gifted and talented students in Louisiana receive services from 800 teachers in 60 out of 66 of our civil parish school systems. These services are financed by a $1,568,000 grant, which includes $100 per gifted child to LEA's. 85 per cent of this $1.6 million is spent on direct services to children in terms of materials, supplies, and equipment. The remaining 15 per cent goes for in-service training to teachers. In addition, more than $13 million is spent on the salaries for teachers

and $2 million on transportation and related ser[illegible]. All told, we spent close to $17 million in our state for gifted and talented children.

We have a state law, and have had for five years, mandating gifted education to all identified gifted or talented children from the ages of 3 to 21. This state law and its subsequent regulations, parallel Federal legislation in P.L. 91-42, and guarantee services to the gifted which are comparable to those for the handicapped. It is this powerful and historic State legislation which is largely responsible for the leadership Louisiana has assumed in gifted education.

We have a parent organization which was chartered ten years ago, which includes 34 chapters and a membership of over 10,000, and has, for the past seven years, hosted an annual convention for parents, teachers, and children, which draws 1200 participants.

I have slashed a lot of this; I am just going to jump.

For academic achievers; specialized high schools such as Benjamin Franklin High School in New Orleans, provide intense accelerated curricula. This High School enjoys the distinction of being second

only to the Bronx High School of Science in percentage of National Merit Scholars it produces.

The Governor's program has been in effect since 1959. It is a summer program for gifted and talented, one of the oldest in the country.

We have computer education in every gifted program in the State, because Louisiana considers computer literacy to be a tool subject, a basic skill needed by gifted education.

Gifted children can enroll in local universities at any age, with expenses borne by the State, if this need is stated on their IP's.

For talented programs, the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts is a model program which has been in effect for eight years. This half-day high school program admits students by audition and graduates several successful performing and practicing artists.

We have an International School for Foreign Languages which emphasizes international economics, geography, and languages.

We are opening, in September, a residential school for gifted 11th and 12th years, which is modeled after the North Carolina school.

As model programs in the talent areas of foreign languages and leadership are put into place, we mandate that these model programs emphasize the development of criteria, so that gifted programs can diversify and move away from simply teaching to high academic achievers.

Two of the problems we are facing now are providing programs for pre-school gifted children in the public schools and, also, finding ways to parallel the curriculum in gifted education with the regular classroom curriculum. We are moving toward acceleration and enrichment that is laid out, rather than at the discretion of the teacher.

I have written testimony which I will submit.

Commissioner HOLTON. I am extremely impressed, as I am sure everybody else is, by this large effort in Louisiana, and the history of it, and the structure, and I hope that you will not slide out anything in your written testimony.

Ms. McHARDY. No.

Commissioner HOLTON. I do have a question. That $17 million, is that State funds?

Ms. McHARDY. All State funds.

Commissioner HOLTON. That is, of course, remarkable.

Ms. McHARDY. You must remember that $13 million of that is teachers' salaries, so it sounds a little better than it is. But $4 million is ---

Commissioner HOLTON. One question more, which is, these gifted youngsters are going to leave Louisiana in certain numbers.

Ms. McHARDY. Well, one of the reasons we are emphasizing gifted education so much in Louisiana is that the Sun Belt, as you know, is enjoying prosperity, a boom, and industry and business in Louisiana, although we have the natural resources to attract more industry, the school systems, historically, had been very poor.

So the Superintendent of Education, Kelley Nix, has put an emphasis on gifted education in order, hopefully, to let the program trickle down to regular education, so that we can attract people from outside the State. We are not planning to let any of ours go; we are trying to attract more in.

Commissioner HOLTON. Thank you for your explanation. My next name here is Felicity Freund.

Ms. FELICITY FREUND. Good afternoon. I find

it rather awe inspiring to follow Louisiana. I come from New Jersey where our total budget for the year for gifted was $100,000.

I really come as a representative of the Gifted Child Society. We are one of the oldest parent organizations in the country, and we have been running a Saturday workshop for 25 years and have serviced about 25,000 students.

During this time, we have tried to help children who do not receive this kind of education in public schools. We service children from the ages of 4 into the early teens and, as part of running a Saturday workshop program, we train teachers and we have open houses. This is a specific example, because I believe you were asking for specific examples.

The Saturday workshop was chosen as a national model in 1975 by the U. S. Office of Education, and has been used as a demonstration model for teachers.

We also sponsor conferences where teachers share ideas on the successful projects they have done in their classrooms.

We have parent support group discussions, parent conferences.

We have a newsletter which we disseminate for our members, and it does go around the country.

One of the more interesting conferences we have run recently, which was alluded to earlier in your deliberations was working with the private sector. We had a conference where we had private sector people come in and talk about the resources they were willing to share with educators.

Please note that this is a parent organization running this kind of thing, because we don't have the state backing for this sort of thing.

Something else I would like to touch upon of significant interest is, we are also running a project for children in an urban area, in the City of Patterson, in New Jersey. This program was funded by the Geraldine Dodge Foundation, and it has been running for three years, and the parents are now trying to raise the money to continue to run it.

One of the problems in a city like this is that 50 per cent of the student population moves every year. It is very difficult to keep track of them. However, the initial students who started are still in the program. The program has expanded in number. It now covers grades 2 through 8.

So, if you are looking for some models to come and follow and copy, a manuscript will be issued next year about this program, and we will be happy to invite anyone who would like to come and see it.

Commissioner HOLTON. Thank you very much.

Commissioner CAMPBELL. May I ask you, is there any coordination with your State Department with respect to any State program of enrichment education?

Ms. FREUND. The person who is in charge of gifted education of the State of New Jersey is running a private gifted organization.

Commissioner CAMPBELL. Are you in competition?

Ms. FREUND. No, I think --

Commissioner CAMPBELL. Or are you complimentary?

Ms. FREUND. No. I am trying to say that he doesn't divide his time equitably.

One thing that our Executive Director, who is nationally known, Gina Ginsburg Riggs, asked me to say, "Would you please reopen the national office in Washington to disseminate all of this information that we have heard about here?" (Applause.)

Commissioner HOLTON. You were kind enough to offer some written material to us, and you now are saying that this is some material that should come to

you.

In addition to opening a national office, what precisely would be most helpful to you, in your work, to have by way of information? In other words, do you feel that you are sufficiently informed about what other states are doing, about what other [illegible] groups are doing, or is the network not yet formed?

Ms. FREUND. This network has been formed in an informal way. There is going to be a meeting in New Orleans next week with people who are trying around the country to produce their own national network because the Federal Government has closed its own office.

Because our organization is much older than many others, we receive complimentary newsletters because our workshop has been a national model and, therefore, other areas of the country have followed this. Parents are usually the first ones to try to do something for their children. Then, we try to persuade public schools to produce programs.

Our program is trying to fill in where the gaps still exist and, of course, we mostly serve people in the local area.

Commissioner HOLTON. Thank you so much. The

next name is Lydia Smith, and Betsy Buchbinder will be the next one after that.

Dr. LYDIA SMITH. I am Dr. Lydia Smith, of Simmons College in Boston, Department of Education, and I wish to report on a mentor-type of program, using volunteer adult professionals who work, one to one, with gifted and talented high school students from the urban high school in Boston with whom we are paired by Judge Garrity's court order; that is, Jamaica Plain High School.

Jamaica Plain High School, as you may know, is a district high school which, in our city, means that the kids there didn't make it to Boston Latin School or to one of the magnet schools. They are there because that is the school they have to go to. And there are some extraordinarily gifted kids among them.

This High School enrols primarily disadvantaged young people from many different races, linguistic, and ethnic groups and, this year, they will receive school credit for the projects which they undertake with their mentors and complete, on topics which range from arts and music, to fashion design, to law, computers, photography, creative writing,

microbiology, and many more. These are all topics not ordinarily part of the school curriculum, but in which the students have shown talent and interest, and they can surely benefit from contact with an adult professional in their own urban community.

The agenda for this mentor program is, obviously, to keep these students in school longer so that they do not drop out and become discouraged, to provide for realistic development of their abilities, and to give them an adult model and a possible career path, and thus to raise their own self-image and expectation for themselves. This program is, we believe, quite replicable in other settings.

Now, to be a little more specific, Simmons is working with School Volunteers for Boston and has received support in this networking, city-based operation from the State Department Office for Gifted and Talented, which has been mentioned before. It is, therefore, a networking operation. We are using adult professional Simmons faculty, people in insurance companies, people in computers, artists who are working in the arts, actors, people who [illegible] can identify.

Identification of these students is very

seldom a paper and pencil test. That is just the kind of test that they do not do well on. Sometimes, it is the wrong language. Sometimes, it is simply an impossible barrier.

Very often, what we use is an interest inventory, self-referral, teacher, counselor, parent referral; and sometimes, even the custodian notices a kid who shows some kind of special or unusual interest or gift.

Usually, these young people have demonstrated perseverance and high performance in the area of their talent.

I have made this short, in case you have questions of me.

Commissioner CAMPBELL. Is this a one on one, where you put children together, perhaps with a mentor, or with each other?

Dr. SMITH. Yes. There is one adult professional with a student who has shown interest, for instance, in the law. We had a young woman working with a female lawyer in a law office, and she was working with a junior girl from Jamaica Plain High School. The hard work is what I haven't told you about, and that is the matching up, the identification, the

liaison work, the working out of the contract, the figuring out how the transportation is going to work, all of that kind of thing.

But, it is doable, and it is very low cost, because these are all volunteer adult professionals.

Commissioner CAMPBELL. Is it an extension of the school year or is it during the school year?

Dr. SMITH. It is after school, but they must maintain their classes, so that, in no sense, are we saying to the teachers, "We will take the bright kids; you are not doing enough for them." Not at all.

However, the Principal has granted, this year, for the first time, school [illegible] so that they can move a little ahead. This, we hope, will increase motivation and attendance on the part of the students, for whom that is sometimes a problem, if they need to travel across the city.

Commissioner HOLTON. Again, your more extensive testimony will be very valuable.

I have two questions. One is, do you also find students that should have been in another school, and, can they get in? Or are they limited to Boston Latin?

Dr. SMITH. I would like to say that Boston Latin sometimes just doesn't have some very gifted kids in it. They have very good students who do very well in school, and they take tests very well, but that is not answering your question.

We also get at Jamaica Plain High School students who have gone to Boston Latin and come back.

But the answer, I think, in the case of Boston Latin, and I may be corrected -- is that you take a test at the sixth-grade level, and then you can enter, or a test at the ninth-grade level, and then you enter. Those are the two gateways.

Commissioner HOLTON. The other question is, why do your volunteers stick with it?

Dr. SMITH. Well, School Volunteers for Boston is one of the oldest volunteer organizations, and we know that, and the reason that Simmons is involved is the court ordered pairing and, also, we simply know each other.

They have worked with children who have been achieving below grade level for a long time, and they very much enjoy working with bright youngsters who come alongside them as their work.

Another reason I think is that we work

on the basis of a contract. You are not going to be paired with this kid forever and ever and ever. There is a project; it will be completed, we have the materials and a project Fair, which happens to be at Simmons at the end of the season. Parents come and everybody shows the kinds of things they have been doing. I think those are some of the reasons.

Commissioner HOLTON. Anyway, in what you are doing, you are thinking just as hard about the managerial aspect as well as the learning part of the program.

Dr. SMITH. Yes. I think that is the hidden curriculum that I heard referred to.

(Tape change.)

BETSY BUCHBINDER. (?) I am truly grateful for the opportunity to address the Commissioner. I have already torn up seven of my fourteen cards because everything that I was going to say has been said before.

Commissioner HOLTON. I hope that is true.

Ms. BUCHBINDER. I am an advocate on behalf of the gifted and talented, and have been for the past seven years. I am neither gifted nor talented, but I am persevering.

I can appreciate the gifts and talents that I see as a public school teacher. I have been attending Symphony for 22 weeks a year for 32 years, but I can play no instrument; but I do appreciate when I see the gifts and talents of the youngsters that have come my way.

I am a co-founder of MAAIP, which is an advocacy organization, and presently its Chairperson. MAAIP stands for the Massachusetts Association for the Advancement of Individual Potential; the name itself could take up one minute.

The name is seven years old. Seven years ago, in Massachusetts, we did not want to come out forthrightly with the term, "gifted and talented", in our very name. Today, that is not true in Massachusetts. We feel quite comfortable with all that we have done, all that we have nurtured, and the programs that we have seen develop in Massachusetts.

As I say, most of what I had prepared to say has already been said far more eloquently than what I am going to say. But, as an advocate, I am persevering and will take this opportunity to just add my final word to this.

This Commission has heard significant

testimony today from scholars and theorists who are acknowledged leaders in the field of gifted education. This Commission now has a heavy burden to sift through the facts already presented and those that will be given through written testimony, so that the nation, through this Commission, will look once again at the needs of the gifted and talented youth.

Plato said, long ago, that "What is ignored in a country will be cultivated there."

Our love affair with the gifted and talented is sadly cyclical. Twenty-five years ago, the embarrassment of Sputnik caused a revival of concern which has been neither sustained nor universally supported in our country, and this Commission, in its ultimate report, may well cause another national reexamination of our attitude towards the gifted, the talented, and the creative child.

The world conferences on gifted have indicated to me that, throughout the world, nations actually do seek out their young gifted children and are fully prepared to encourage and support them. I suggest most earnestly that we in this country reexamine this attitude that we have about hostility towards them, the fact that we use the word "elitism",

about them, that they can make it on their own.

I suggest that we search for them, not wait for them to miraculously emerge, having survived national neglect.

Let us, for a moment, look beyond today's hearings to the tomorrows this country will face, if it deliberately chooses not to develop its own great natural resource, for not too long down the line, we could become a nation dependent upon the gifts, the talent, and the creative forces initiated by the youth of foreign countries. I propose we never let it happen.

Our vigor and vitality as a nation may well be challenged, if we choose neglect instead of nurturance.

I suggest that this Commission, through its report to the Secretary of Education and to the country, urge that a national effort be made to seek and [illegible]ucational accommodation for this small popula[illegible]ur midst. I urge you to be the catalyst towards that end.

I am grateful, again, that the Commission has come to Massachusetts, and that we have had this opportunity. Thank you.

Commissioner CAMPBELL. Did you indicate that you were a teacher?

Ms. BUCHBINDER. I am a public school teacher, yes.

Commissioner CAMPBELL. What do you teach?

Ms. BUCHBINDER. I teach all subjects. I am a master of everything in the elementary school system.

Commissioner CAMPBELL. In connection with identification, we have had someone who said that she wasn't sure she could identify, in the classroom, those persons, those children, who have gifts. Have you been able to identify them?

Ms. BUCHBINDER. Not immediately, no. I would rather take the child who is not quite so neat, who may not be traditional in his responses, and probably cultivate that child more than the child who tends to be neat, and the halo effect is over that child as well.

But, as an advocate, I have heard probably thousands of parents tell me stories about how their child deviated from what traditionally would be the gifted child.

Commissioner CAMPBELL. Do you consider identification of the gifted to be a serious problem?

Ms. BUCHBINDER. Yes, it is. It has been said that the sixth grade teacher of Walt Disney felt that he was terribly uncreative; so, I feel very insecure.

Commissioner HOLTON. Could I ask you a quick question?

Ms. BUCHBINDER. Yes.

Commissioner HOLTON. It is very well to ask for a national leadership, but then, when you go to the national leadership they say that we need a national mandate, chicken and egg. Where will you, as it were, get the grass roots evidence that the national leaders can dare to come out in favor of the gifted and talented?

Ms. BUCHBINDER. As an advocate, I am very well aware that advocacy groups are growing up all over this country. We have representatives of advocacy groups right here in this room, three that I can pick out quite quickly, and there probably are others here who chose not to speak. But the movement is growing. It is growing across the country.

I attended the World Conference on Gifted in Canada, and I spoke to a group of people. There were probably 40 different nations represented in that room, of parents, advocates, and teachers who joined

them as advocates on behalf of the gifted.

The movement is growing. It does take time for it to swell to the point where the government will react.

Commissioner HOLTON. Is there actually a movement that is identifiable ---

Ms. BUCHBINDER. It is not cohesive. It is not a cohesive movement, but there are cadres of people and groups all over the country, and we are becoming more vocal and, therefore, our gratitude to you for bringing so many of us together.

Ms. ARTEMIS KIRK. I am the Director of Libraries at Simmons College and speak on behalf of the Association of College and Research Libraries in what it is that we do in the educational process.

To further the quality of academic libraries, to advance the progress of higher education and its programs, and to act as a catalyst for change in an ever-evolving society, so that we improve the education and quality of life of our clientele. These are some of the ACRL's objectives. Librarians meet them in many ways.

First, through the development of our collections. Libraries are the world's great treasure

houses of the knowledge of every civilization, and our resources will endure, despite changing ideologies and evolving cultures. Without our collections, there can be no excellence in education.

Second, through the services of our library staffs.

Third, through resource sharing. Recognizing the limits in purchasing that most libraries face, yet recognizing the public's need for information, libraries strive to expand their collections by engaging in cooperative arrangements with other libraries and institutions.

Fourth, through technology. Through telecommunication facilities and networking, we can provide inter-library loans rapidly. We can do bibliographic literature searching for you, and computerized catalogues through remote access terminals and many more.

Fifth, through instruction. There are countless insitutions that have superb and varied programs of library instruction, designed by their librarians to teach all of our patrons, from the most elemental to the most sophisticated levels of library research.

Libraries serve the gifted and talented in many ways. First, we are free and egalitarian; we are not elitist at all. In libraries, a student is limited only by the boundaries of her own creativity. We provide materials and resources, not only to enhance the academic disciplines, but also to enrich a student through her independent work. We take the initiative to tailor special programs for exceptional students. Many students, for example, are brought to college early and given tutorials in the use of library resources, so that they can cope successfully with the rigors of an advanced academic program.

Libraries are providing numerous types of print and non-print resources for the creative exploitation of our patrons -- micro-computers, media, archival materials, career resource materials; all of these are provided for the exceptional student and for the ordinary student as well.

Libraries have evolved from the reading room atmosphere offering little or no patron assistance to the interactive research environments of today, but we need you to help us do more.

Here is what you can do for us. Acknowledge libraries. It is now so easy for you to run to

the corner bookstore or to purchase information from a commercial vendor that you forget that your own library can provide you with all of these resources and services. What is more, it will cost you little or nothing at the library, whereas you will always be at the mercy of profit-making financial organizations, which also may succumb to fadism in what they choose to sell.

Continue to demand excellence in your libraries and library staffs. Support bibliographic instruction and demand that it become an integral part of your institution's curriculum, if it is not already, and insist that the work of instructing students in library use be shared with grammar and high schools.

Support libraries financially. Dont allow your institutions to make libraries the target of cutbacks because, without adequate library staff and resources, the academic enterprise will be impaired.

And, as you have fought against the increasingly restricted funding opportunities in higher education, help us fight to restore or keep alive government support for libraries.

Finally, support us politically. We are shaken to the very essence of our existence by threats from special interest groups which would have us capitulate to their demands. Libraries and librarians will continue to provide free and open access to knowledge and information in accordance with the library bill of rights. We may hope to continue to allow individuals the freedom to discern for themselves the meritorious from the mediocre, and stimulate them to replace inferior ideas with superior ones. Thank you.

Commissioner HOLTON. Let me ask you one question. I can see the national concern in here for free and open access, which is very close to our Constitutional provisions in that area, but when it comes to the need for library support, -- there used to be, of course, a very large Federal project; I am familiar with that; and, with Weidener Library and its 8 million items waiting to be serviced, I know what the absence of this Federal money can do to a library. But, how do we deal with the argument that libraries are very locally used and, therefore, are predominantly the responsibility of the locality? In other words, this testimony should go to the local town council,

rather than to a National Commission.

Ms. KIRK. There is a great problem and perhaps an erroneous perception that people have about libraries. Weidener Library is one of the only ones in the world that has 8 million volumes. All of us have no business collecting the resources that everybody else is collecting. We share the resources that we have and, if we all attempted to become Weidener Libraries, how poor a series of institutions we would be.

We cannot afford, we never could afford to develop our collections without regard for everyone else. There has to be a concerted effort to draw on our own specialties for the institutions that we serve as we serve them, and to hope that libraries like Weidener or to hope that libraries formed with national consensus, with national funds, will provide us the wealth of resources that we must maintain as a body of humanists living in today's society, not forcing each of us to duplicate other people's resources.

Commissioner HOLTON. Yes, don't imagine for a moment that I wanted you to become Weidener Library.

Ms. KIRK. I would love to.

Commissioner HOLTON. I am trying to get a

theoretical base for the national argument, and what you have just said I think may be the entry, namely, that libraries should not be considered by themselves, but a network of services that can be interchanged, so that you with what you have might come in handy elsewhere and will not be forced to be duplicated elsewhere.

Ms. KIRK. Exactly.

Commissioner HOLTON. And, therefore, one sees the library not as a little building with some books, but rather as part of a network, and then the national aspect becomes more clear.

Ms. KIRK. My expanded testimony, I hope, will amplify this better, but libraries are very much engaged in resource sharing. We do have a de facto bibliographic network that serves the entire country. It emanates from Ohio State University, and there are over 6,000 libraries in the country connected. In this way, we share the resources precisely so as not to extend our limited monies in the wrong way.

Commissioner HOLTON. I think I like the extended testimony. We shall dwell on that.

Ms. KIRK. Thank you.

Commissioner CAMPBELL. Mr. Austin, I would like

to ask you a question, if I may, because I am not sure that I perhaps heard you correctly. Did you say that there ought to be identification of "prestigious" colleges and universities to which these options for the gifted and talented students should be provided? Was it in that term, or was it perhaps that one would not look at a broader range where there is the need for, as was pointed out to us today, the human side? I am not sure what message came across to me and, all of a sudden, I question it.

Mr. AUSTIN. My point was that, in addition to prestigious colleges, gifted and talented students also have opportunities for an excellent college education through the honors programs that are provided at a great number of other colleges and universities, and so those as well as the opportunities in the prestigious colleges should be called to the attention of parents and students and guidance counselors.

Commissioner HOLTON. Let me thank all of you. It was really very useful, indeed. I assure you that we have listened to every word.

(The hearing was thereupon adjourned at 5:15 o'clock p.m.)