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AUTHOR Howley, Craig
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ABSTRACT

This speech by an educator and parent of gifted children addresses the problem of appropriate educational services for gifted children, concluding that advocacy for these children entails pushing for acceleration, an often neglected but effective option. The paper begins with anecdotes which illustrate the unmet needs of gifted children and which identify recent trends questioning the economic utility of higher education. The paper suggests that gifted children often learn laziness in school and that the goal for such children should not be "normalization" as it is for exceptional children with handicaps but, rather, maximization of the child's potential. The presentation claims that rapid progress is needed to stimulate gifted children to stay gifted, and therefore acceleration should always be considered when developing Individualized Education Programs for gifted students. A framework for rapid progress is offered, listing service and placement options ranging from regular age-grade placement to an advanced program in a special school. (DB)

Keeping Children Gifted: How It Happens and How It Doesn't

Keynote Address for Tennessee Association for the Gifted

Nashville, TN
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Craig Howley, codirector
ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools
P.O. Box 1348
Charleston, WV 25325

1-800/624-9120
FAX: 304/347-0487
Internet: u56e3.wvnvm.wvnet.edu

Keeping Children Gifted: How It Happens and How It Doesn't

This is a mostly true story about a bright young, overweight child I'll call Keith. He was in the second grade at the time. He rode the bus to attend this rural school, where he was in the gifted program and everybody knew it. His father was a big lawyer in town, and a former football star into the bargain, so you can see that Keith presented a lot for other children to resent. In short, Keith's journey by bus was no picnic.

He put up with the teasing for some weeks, but his preconscious and precocious mind was hard at work. At last he told his tormentor, "OK, although I'm fat now, I don't need to be fat forever. But you'll always be stupid."

Unfortunately this is not the end of the story. It's the middle of the story. Keith was bored out of his gourd by school by the end of second grade. He should--in our view--have gone into the fourth or fifth grade the next year. A number of kids had already done this sort of thing successfully at the school. Precedents, as you probably know, help. And, after all, his reading and math scores suggested the eighth grade would have been an entirely suitable placement.

But his father was concerned about football. So Keith went through his full 13 years of public school. He did play football, but spent most of his time on the bench. He wasn't a star. He's doing just fine now in a local college, and he <u>is</u> happy. Incidentally, he's no longer overweight.

Also, his mother has remarried.

About now you may be thinking, "Yup, this Howley guy's a monomaniacal crackpot." I guess it's true. I think there are more important things in life than football. In West Virginia, at any rate, this perspective on life--that some things are more important than football--is a form of heresy. You can be stuffed into a pigskin and sent to Tennessee for more intensive therapy.

So here's another football story. We used to live in the deep country. I loved it, partly because country people are a whole lot wiser and more sensible than they get credit for. The wisest ones always seemed to me those with the least education. Maybe you know the myth about Appalachia: We're supposed to be the "people left behind." There's actually a Great-Society-era book by that title. As far as I can see, though, these least-educated of our colleagues are really "with it."

Anyway, one day I was watching football practice at the local high school. One of my young neighbors was also in town, and came over to talk and watch. The local quarterback was doing pretty well in the skirmishes. In typical laconic fashion, my neighbor remarked, "Yes, I reckon he'll go to college and play football some day." I've thought about this remark for a long time, because I thought it was just ridiculous when I first heard it.

I now think it shows considerable wisdom. It conveyed my neighbor's skepticism about the alleged value of a college experience, but it was honestly admiring of and hopeful for the talent in front of us. My neighbor, incidently, was in the process of not completing high school. He was certainly not about to move

to the city, he liked to go squirrel hunting, and he was making a lot more money than my spouse or me as a "roustabout" in the oil fields. Try telling somebody in this circumstance that a high school diploma is so all-fired useful. It just isn't. Really--there's research on this point. I'll bet you didn't know that the biggest difference in earnings in rural versus urban areas is among the best-educated. The least difference--you've guessed it--is among high school dropouts. On the basis of his commitments, this kid made a choice that was far more rational than he knew. I certainly did not appreciate this fact at the time.

The truth is that I enjoy football. For most of us, though, there's not much future in it, right? This is a fact that we are now all eager to convey to our African-American students about every sort of sport. "Your chances of playing professional ball are 1 in 10,000. Learn something useful," we say. This is good advice, but it only scratches the surface.

What's the point? It's simple. I think such advice is the reason we don't really care whether or not our most able students excel in their studies. They, at least--our most able students--can learn something useful with their eyes taped shut and ears full of beans. Not to worry, we think, let them enjoy their childhoods; they will become doctors and lawyers in due course.

And it's true, they do. My parents saw to it that I went to a very elite private Yankee university in the troubled days of the late 1960s. Al Gore probably suffered the same fate, to judge by his accent. Any way, the times were so troubled that even incipient

presidents felt they could take part in demonstrations against, of all things, an American war.

The times were so troubled, in fact, that many of my colleagues were, at the time, swearing off what they then interpreted as the "rat race" of comfortable middle class conformism. They not only opposed the war, they opposed becoming doctors and lawyers.

Guess what? Today, most of them <u>are</u> doctors and lawyers, with a sprinkling of professors, and a hard-core lunatic fringe of teachers, journalists, novelists, and social workers.

Let me make it clear that I'm not opposed to the good things that lawyers and doctors do. My cousin is a lawyer and I'm trying desperately to convince my youngest daughter--who likes science--to become a doctor.

My daughter can hardly believe that she's the victim of such a campaign. I'll have more to say about this campaign, incidentally, tomorrow.

The thing is, I can see no particular reason why we should cherish such a fate for so many bright youngsters (my daughter excluded, of course). Many bright kids are <u>literally destined</u> for some measure of success in the world, let's face it. Cultivating this destiny of success--which has as much to do with where many but not all of these kids come from (those comfortable, conforming middle-class backgrounds)--is not much of a challenge for any of us. What I believe is that an education that is not challenging is one you can't learn anything <u>good</u> from. So where is this challenge to

come from? It certainly doesn't come from vegetating, from going with the flow, from basking in the mere comfort of one's advantages.

I think the answer lies in the fact that we're still identifying gifted kids on the basis of academic talent. You all are familiar with the debates and dilemmas surrounding identification. Those are interesting questions, but the real challenge is to develop the sorts of talent we identify. I've always assumed that people who go into gifted education were interested in that challenge. Part of what I'm suggesting here, then, is that meeting the challenge of developing the talent of bright youngsters will inevitably teach us something good, too.

But what I see actually happening in gifted education is sometimes--perhaps often--at odds with my presumption that gifted education is meeting the challenge. I've spent a long time trying to figure out why. I'll have more to say about the horns of this dilemma tomorrow.

Today, the topic is how to keep the talent we identify, but never really define too well, alive. Really, it's about more than keeping that talent alive--it's about how to keep it moving; more still, it's about how to maximize that talent.

Being an teacher is a tough business. Education is about changing young people's lives. What we're really talking about is taking risks with students' lives. We're talking about not taking the path of least resistance.

We're not talking about making useful citizens, either. Unfortunately, for us, whenever the topic of funding for gifted

education comes up, we fall back on the ploy that gifted children are the nation's most valuable resource. Look at the legislation--this line never fails to appear. From Terman to Renzulli, most of us have bought into this line. Even those of us who disagree are tempted to lie when confronted with a choice between truth ("No--all our children are equally valuable to our future") and money for gifted programs.

In my perhaps twisted view, the bad educator--and the bad citizen, bad bureaucrat, and bad politician--is the one who believes that the most important feature of knowledge is its usefulness. That's why I can appreciate the wisdom of rural high school dropouts. They dropout of school because they recognize that the knowledge they are likely to get through schooling is not useful, all official claims to the contrary. They are justifiably skeptical of official claims. Wait! Don't leave yet. Maybe I can explain things--that's my hope as a teacher.

For instance, if you doubt my word, check out some of the studies about the economic returns to a college education in recent decades. I'm not talking about those studies that take the whole U.S. population ages 16 to 80 and report income by education level. Sure, in these comparisons, the 80-year-olds with a fourth-grade education don't fare too well over the course of a long life.

What I'm talking about is what our children can expect from a college degree. In the 1970s the difference in economic returns between a high school diploma and a college degree went to almost nothing. In the 1980s, however, the value of a high school diploma

plummeted, and it looked like a college degree was somewhat more valuable. In a more recent study, reported last month in Education Daily, however, the differential was reported to be about $600 a year. Would any economically rational person invest 40 to 80 thousand dollars for such a return? Another recent study--based on projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics--also suggests that upward mobility will decline substantially in the next ten years.

Of course more knowledge and more schooling are "useful" in some ways. It's just that the bottom line really isn't the bottom line when it comes to knowledge. If this is what we really think, then knowledge itself is in trouble. Many people in the academic world have reached just this conclusion.

In any case, if we all made our decisions about higher education on the basis of economic value to each of us individually, I'm afraid we'd all choose to be doctors, lawyers, or else high-techies of some sort, because it's true that some fields yield a much better return on investment than others. In fact, for equivalent training, some skin-colors and genders (you know which) yield a much higher return on investment than others. The same argument applies to ability levels, in exactly the same unfair way. That's part of the weakness of our field, not part of its strength.

Maybe sometime in the future, genetic engineering will allow us all to be white male genetic engineers. I can't see that such a society would be very different from one based on in which we all just sell hamburgers to each other--which is what some people say

we're coming to if we allow our economy to become based on the provision of services rather than on the production of goods.

It's a grim picture, however you look at it--so economic utility does not seem to me a very promising avenue for individuals in society to pursue. Yet this is the standard by which nearly everything in our society does proceed.

Education, however, has the possibility of being a refreshing exception. We should recognize that that's why we're here. There's a difference between education and schooling. Schooling is about becoming normal. Really--we used to prepare teachers in "normal schools," right? But education is about becoming the different person you really are.

And this brings me to my main point: the way to develop talent and keep gifted children gifted.

Gifted children are supposed to have the ability--without much prodding--to learn more, and faster than other children. They do have this ability, in general (that's how we usually identify them, after all), but it is simply not true that they can do it without prodding. It's not that they're innately lazy. For that, they have to go to school.

I'm serious. In most cases, gifted kids learn to be lazy in school. No one sets out consciously to teach them this lesson, but the circumstances of schooling arrange the lesson very nicely. Imagine--this won't be hard for anyone here--sitting in the second grade and being able to read at the eighth grade level (whatever that really is, it's a lot more challenging than the second-grade

reader). So long as this second-grade child gets good grades, however, no one troubles too much, except perhaps the teacher of the gifted.

But if that child starts to make trouble, watch out! Then it's time for counseling. This actually happened to my oldest child--the recommendation, that is, not the counseling. We thought we knew what was really happening, and it turns out we did. At the time we were working with handicapped kids, and we were just beginning to explore the literature on gifted education. This experience, though, taught us a lot and prompted our professional involvement with gifted education. Some of you are probably here for exactly the same reason. I think sometimes we make too big a deal of the distinction between personal and professional interest.

None of the alternatives for gifted kids is really good. Most people cannot afford special private schools and would not want to be separated from their young children. So we're stuck with making the best of a bad situation. This is a lot like life in general, however, so there's not really any cause for alarm.

So it should be obvious that, in an imperfect world, gifted children need advocates, and that's why it makes sense to view the gifted as "exceptional" cases and to administer gifted programs with the rest of special education. At least this tactic--I won't call it a "strategy"--provides a forum where the issues can be addressed. Again, housing the gifted in special education is a tactic, not a strategy. Good strategies are never so obvious. Tactics have to do

with means; strategies have to do with ends, with things like the aims of education.

One reason special education is just a tactic is that it has limits, particularly for very able kids. Very able kids confront the circumstances of schooling on a quite different basis from handicapped children, and some special education directors fail to appreciate these differences sufficiently. Being special, then, offers few guarantees, aside from a guaranteed forum. This is where strategy comes in.

Advocacy is the strategy. Being an advocate is tough, especially when it means disabusing your colleagues of their deep-seated misconceptions. The fundamental difference between handicapped kids, for instance, and very able kids has to do with the relationship between prior achievement and future achievement.

With handicapped kids, we want to <u>break</u> that connection. In practice, this means we <u>do</u> want to normalize them--to help them take part in life in ways their handicaps would otherwise prevent. With gifted kids, however, we want to <u>strengthen</u> the connection with past achievement.

In practice, this means several things. Chief among these things is that we <u>don't</u> want to normalize the gifted. It's not so important that we help them take part in life in ways their <u>gifts</u> would otherwise prevent. To me, this is an obvious point. Not so with many people. For them, gifted children are at risk for unhappiness. For me, however, the risk is that they will become stupid. The word "stupid" doesn't mean "having a low IQ," by the

way. It means "stupefied," "stultified," "driven into a torpor," "sedated," "anesthetized." Stupidity is a kind of behavior, so contrary to Keith's opinion, we can--each of us--become stupid.

Failure to appreciate the point that we shouldn't work to protect very able children from their abilities is a source of much anxiety among not only gifted educators, but among parents of very bright children--Keith's father, for instance.

Nonetheless, I firmly believe that the prerogatives must rest with parents. As a parent like most of you, I observe and take part in my children's struggles. The main idea that sustains me is the belief that my spouse and I care most for them; and that fact morally entitles us to know what is best for them.

Extending this view to other parents is simply a point of respect, difficult as it may be in some circumstances.

An emerging counter-view to the idea that children somehow "belong" to their parents first of all is that children, through the process of schooling, somehow belong to the state--or to the national interest--more than to their parents. This is one of the views implicit in the idea that the gifted are the nation's most valuable resource. Surely, this is a dangerous and evil idea.

In comparison to those few parents who want to normalize their able children, educators who worry that our challenge is to normalize the gifted are more troublesome. The reason is simply that normalizing the gifted is a sure way to undermine their gifts.

Like many of you, I've always hated this term, "gifts." It implies divine intervention, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, it implies that the recipient is undeserving.

You can imagine Keith's tormentor, for example, saying to himself, "Why don't I get any presents?" It would be a good question. The distribution of talent (however it may occur) is not fair, and the way the world works is not fair either, and, further, that lack of fairness compounds the question immeasurably. I don't have any near so flippant an answer at the ready as Keith did.

The key word, however, is not "gifts." We're really talking about "potential," academic potential, not undeserved or mysterious gifts. What we call gifts are really just evident potentials, in this case, the potential for academic growth of a high order.

You may be saying to yourselves at this point, "What about musical or artistic talent? What about creativity and leadership?" Music and art have a very limited place in most elementary and secondary curricula. Look at the national goals--even second language learning did not make it onto that short list of allegedly most worthy goals.

Nonetheless I'd argue that music and art are indeed academic subjects. They can be taught, they can be learned, and they represent the human condition in the way nothing else can. So, by all means, advocate for the development of such talents. But doing that requires programs that are very unique--programs that must typically connect with things outside the schools, because schools are so woefully underfunded and because music and art just aren't

considered "useful." That lack of utility, by the way, is why they don't appear in the national education goals. Can you picture such a goal: "By the year 2000, American students will be number one in the world in art and music"? It wouldn't even make sense to most people.

Creativity and leadership are different. Creativity and leadership should somehow be part of everything educators do, all the time. But creativity and leadership are not--and should not be--the exclusive domain of gifted programs. Teaching requires both. If teachers are not flexible, original, elaborate, and fluent--at least some of the time--then they become easy victims of bad bureaucrats.

Democracy, moreover, requires leadership be open to all. If leadership training is valuable, then everybody should get a dose of it. But if our form of democracy is anything less than a perfect democracy, and if we truly prize making it better--then maybe those who need leadership training ought to be those <u>least likely</u> actually to assume leadership positions.

On this basis, we would actually avoid leadership training in gifted programs! Do you all know about the Highlander School? That seems to be their approach, and I personally agree with it. Professionally, I would argue that training in how to be creative and how to be a leader should never be a <u>focus</u> of programs that--like most gifted programs--identify students on the basis of academic characteristics. There's room for it, of course, but to no greater extent than in any educational program.

There is a feature of creativity, however, that is essential for us to recognize, and it's just the thing that bugged E. Paul Torrance at the start of his career. It's this: divergent kids get trashed in school. And the brighter they are, the more likely teachers are to find such kids downright obnoxious. These kids get referred less often for testing, at least for the gifted program. If normalization is a problem confronting most bright kids, it's much worse among divergent bright kids. With them, some teachers seem perversely bent on breaking the spirit.

So attention to creativity-as-divergent-behavior is warranted. And it connects to the idea that very able kids should be normalized. At base this tendency to normalize gifted students--which, let's admit it, is much stronger among regular educators than among gifted educators--is a strategy to eliminate academic potential among the undeservedly gifted. The resentment that Keith experienced on the bus is alive and well among educators.

This is the reason that my colleagues and I have been so vehement in our support for acceleration. Acceleration is not a terrorist tactic, but it certainly does strike terror into the hearts of educators who view schooling as a process of normalization.

To such people, acceleration endangers a well-oiled, but constantly threatened system. This system--a regimen of age-grade-placement--was constructed at great cost during most of this century. Proposals to let a bright youngster avoid parts of this system--what David Tyack calls the "one-best-system"--arouse a deep-

seated suspicion that some form of sedition is underway. This system is very content to retain large numbers of children in grade (despite the fact that research suggests that very little benefit results), and the system is equally reluctant to advance kids when the need warrants. And this despite the fact that research shows that substantial benefits accrue to kids who are accelerated.

These two tendencies--retaining many kids and accelerating very few are two sides of the same coin. Whose face is stamped on that coin? Let's hope it's not ours.

Actually, I think the face on that coin belongs to Frederick W. Taylor, the great efficiency expert whose work so influenced the design of the one-best-system. In case you hadn't noticed, the system is now under attack from all sides--right, left, top, and bottom. I'm located somewhere near the bottom left, as you've probably guessed.

For practical reasons, however, I'd advise you not to let yourselves, as teachers or administrators, be viewed as an acceleration terrorist. (It's not a bad role for parents or higher education types, though, under certain desperate circumstances. Deciding when a situation is truly despearte--as opposed to seemingly desperate--involves a lot of anguish, especially if you're a parent).

I find that it's useful to keep in mind the inherent connection between unusual academic potential and rapid progress. Without rapid progress, gifted kids don't stay gifted. It really is that simple.

What's not so simple is cultivating rapid progress among a small group of kids (often viewed by your colleagues as undeservedly advantaged). In your jobs, you must work amicably with suspicious colleagues over the long term--that's very complicated. It is so complicated, of course, that it often doesn't happen at all. I guess I mean two things by that "it": it's difficult to maintain amicable relationships if you view yourself as an advocate, and it's difficult to cultivate rapid progress among the gifted under any circumstances.

No one has all the answers about how to make this complicated trick work. The range of alternative scenarios is just too wide. Schools and colleagues vary greatly.

That's why strategy is so important. You've got to know what you're doing and why. What you're doing (if you accept the argument I've been trying to make) is helping gifted kids make rapid progress in a system that is organized against it in the name of efficiency--the "one-best-system." I will have more to say about the "why's" of this strategy tomorrow.

Acceleration, obviously, is the core of the gifted education strategy conceived in this way. Everything that happens in a gifted program can be related to it. One caveat is in order, at this point: not every gifted kid needs to be "accelerated" in the same way, at the same time, or to the same degree. Acceleration is not a one-best-system for gifted kids, and it is certainly not a panacea. It's steady work for the teacher of the gifted--it prods both student and system--and it involves professional and personal risks.

Behind any strategy is a vision, and, in fact, the strategy won't make much sense unless the vision behind it is clear. So let me kind of sketch out a framework for advocating acceleration.

This framework is a kind of twisted version of the familiar "continuum of services." Since most of you come from special ed backgrounds, you've already got the basic idea. I've put it on a transparency.

[TRANSPARENCY #1: Framework of Options for Rapid Progress].

(note: copies of transparencies appear at the end of the text of this speech)

This framework is all about rapid progress. And that's what makes it different from the "continuum of services" for handicapped kids.

The scheme for handicapped kids reflects their absolute need for social inclusion--you know, the idea of the "least restrictive environment." The principle of least restrictive environment means that to the greatest extent possible, handicapped kids should be educated with their normal peers. Under the one-best-system this means that if a child is eight years old, the underlying least-restrictive-placement is a regular third-grade classroom.

Applying this principle wholesale to all gifted kids is an educational disaster. What it means is that we should forget about rapid progress.

So my colleagues and I invented this scheme as an antidote. The new and twisted scheme for gifted kids puts the range of options that support rapid progress into a simple list. In an ideal world, every option would be open to any child--gifted or not. So advocacy for kids who are able, but do not qualify for the gifted program is also possible under this scheme, but it requires a lot of support from the building principal, and probably from the central office as well.

But with identified gifted kids, we often--as I understand is the case in Tennessee--have the support of law, which provides one means (imperfect though it may be) for such advocacy.

Note that, under this scheme, regular age-grade-placement is presumed to be the least suitable option for a gifted child. And if you had a very, very bright kid--of the sort celebrated in newspaper articles--the ideal placement would be presumed to be a really good, special school for talented kids.

Let me remind you, however, that this is just a "framework." It's not reality, it's a concept. It's a useful concept, however, only to the extent that you keep the shortcomings of reality clearly in view. Reality places all sorts of restrictions on the use of concepts of any sort, particularly one like this.

Those restrictions consist, in the first instance, of who does what to whom in your school or district. At any moment in time, some options may be more promising than others, just because of who influences decisions most strongly. The point is to push the limits, as you work to educate your colleagues. Be clever, be

forward, be professional, be responsibly manipulative. Easier said than done, of course.

In the second instance, these restrictions consist of actual physical limits to available options. Not many--if any--of us have publicly supported schools for talented students nearby. So perhaps we need to break the above scheme down somewhat in the name of flexibility. Be creative--this framework is not any sort of regulation. None of the points on this continuum represent just one alternative. So here's another transparency:

[TRANSPARENCY #2: PLACEMENT ALTERNATIVES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK].

I could continue to flesh-out the framework in this way, but so can you. As I said, this is not a regulation. Where one or another alternative belongs is much less important than that you carry the framework and the possible alternatives around with you <u>in your head</u>. It might be a good exercise actually to write up such a list, and to revisit it from time to time as your circumstances change.

And you can get more detailed still--under grade-skipping, for instance, you will soon enough know which teachers at which grade levels will be supportive, and which will not. At the secondary level, you'll soon know which colleges and universities you can work with on early-entry. Etcetera, etcetera.

You can trot these alternatives out, moreover, whenever you're involved with an IEP meeting. In fact, acceleration should always be considered at an IEP meeting. (I hope I'm not contradicting

anything Tom may have said in his course, yesterday, because I wouldn't want to leave any lingering doubts in your minds about this fact). Let me say that this recommendation--that acceleration should always be considered during an IEP meeting--is still roundly rejected in one of the districts in which my own children went to school.

"We can't do anything about that," said the gifted coordinator, the teacher of the gifted, and the special education director. "That's for regular education."

In such a climate of ignorance and fear, it takes great effort to arrange anything at all productive. If you're stuck in such a situation--and I bet many of you are--try not to succumb to the ignorance and fear that surround you. Support parents who ask for acceleration. Find the courage to raise the issue yourself. You can try to arrange for support prior to the meeting. You can meet with parents beforehand. Just remember that you have the weight of professional evidence on your side.

In the case in point--the district where my kids were enrolled--the state regulations actually said that acceleration <u>should</u> be considered in IEP meetings. The county people were simply acting roguishly. The were outside the law and they were unprofessional. Finding the courage to confront such abominable situations is where leadership in gifted education belongs, in my view.

All of this--at both elementary and secondary levels--rests on the idea that gifted kids can and should progress rapidly through school and into college at a rate that matches their potential.

When you look at a very able child, you should be able to imagine a 13-year-old high school graduate or a 17-year-old college graduate.

This really is an image that horrifies many people. The world is a dangerous place, and it is much easier to be quietly or desperately unhappy than it is to be truly fulfilled.

We worry that moving kids ahead on the basis of a couple of test scores is a recipe for unhappiness. My impression of the literature on the topic, however, is that accelerated progress doesn't influence a person's happiness much one way or the other. It is equally true that not every acceleration works out for the best. That's part of the reason that plans need to be adjusted on a regular basis. Mistakes can be overcome. I'm doing a session about my own three kids tomorrow. Each of them has been successfully accelerated, but not without intense struggle, and not without some misgivings.

A wise acquaintance of mine who served in the Marines in Vietnam confided that he at last understood something about happiness. "It's not," he said, "what you <u>don't have</u> that will make you happy, it's what you <u>do have</u> that will make you happy."

Gifted kids actually have an exceptional potential to read and write and think. Schooling too often seems to frustrate the development of that potential, and it's very difficult to believe that bright kids become "happy" as a result of such frustration.

No one has summed up this view of schools and talent development better in one sentence than Garret Keizer, a teacher from rural

Vermont, who, by the way is also a lay preacher. This is what he says:

> For consider, if the real world is as full of injustice, waste, and woe as it appears to be, and school has no other purpose than to prepare young people to man and woman the machinery of the real world, then schools are pernicious institutions.

My faith as an educator is that developing children's potential to the maximum is valuable for its own sake. My faith as a human being is that our happiness--the well-being of everyone on earth--depends on employing for the good, whatever talents we manage to develop as we pass through this imperfect, unfair world. Thank you.

FRAMEWORK OF OPTIONS FOR RAPID PROGRESS

(most advanced)

SPECIAL SCHOOL -- ADVANCED PROGRAM

SPECIAL CLASS -- ADVANCED PROGRAM

RESOURCE PROGRAM -- ADVANCED PROGRAM

REGULAR CLASS -- DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM

REGULAR CLASS -- ENRICHED PROGRAM

REGULAR CLASS -- REGULAR PROGRAM

(least advanced)

PLACEMENT ALTERNATIVES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK

(examples)

SPECIAL SCHOOL -- ADVANCED PROGRAM

1. PRIVATE SCHOOL

2. MAGNET SCHOOL

3. STATE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

4. EARLY-ENTRY PROGRAMS (COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY)

REGULAR CLASS -- DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM

1. GRADE SKIPPING

2. CROSS-GRADE PLACEMENT WITHIN SCHOOL

3. CROSS-SCHOOL PLACEMENT

4. EARLY ENTRY (ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, SECONDARY)