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ABSTRACT

These two newsletters on gifted education from spring and fall of 2000 include the following articles: (1) "NRC/GT: Developing Expertise Using the 'Big Red Notebook'" (E. Jean Gubbins), which discusses the creation of a professional development module as an intervention tool to foster expertise in using the pedagogy of gifted education in general education classrooms; (2) "Counseling Gifted and Talented Students" (Nicholas Colangelo), which explores the psychological characteristics of gifted students and suggests counseling techniques for promoting positive self-concept, reaching at-risk students, and helping with the transition from high school to college and career counseling; (3) "Challenging Schools' Expectations of Native American Students" (James Raborn), which examines the identification and placement of Native American students in gifted and talented programs; (4) "Assessing and Advocating for Gifted Students: Perspectives for School and Clinical Psychologists" (Nancy M. Robinson), which discusses the kinds of advocacy a psychologist can offer; (5) "NRC/GT Query: Are Programs and Services for Gifted and Talented Students Responsive to Beliefs?" (E. Jean Gubbins), which explores beliefs about abilities and the impact on gifted programming; (6) "Recurring Themes in Career Counseling of Gifted and Talented Students" (Meredith J. Greene), which discusses the specific challenges faced by gifted and talented females and unhealthy perfectionism; and (7) "Dealing with the Needs of Underachieving Gifted Students in a Suburban School District: What Works!" (Ceil Frey), which describes a program that targets underachieving gifted students. (Articles include references.) (CR)

# The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented Newsletter

**Edited By**
**Jean E. Gubbins**

**2002**

NRC G/T

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented Newsletter

Fall 2002

**Inside**



# NRC/GT: Developing Expertise Using the "Big Red Notebook"

**E. Jean Gubbins**
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How do you like to learn?

1. Read
2. Listen
3. Talk
4. Role Play
5. Write
6. All of the above

Learning is complex at best. We have all been to school; we think we know how we learn best. We may have one or more preferences for learning something new and a different preference for refreshing knowledge and skills that need updating. We also recognize that learning occurs in school, home, and community environments, as well as the world at large. As individuals, we have considerable expertise in transferring knowledge and skills from familiar to unfamiliar situations. Practice, reflection, feedback, and redesign serve as critical components of these learning approaches. However, we cannot guarantee that our personal preferences for learning are a match to that of our colleagues or to one or more students in our classrooms. We can increase the likelihood that learning preferences are appropriate for individuals by designing multiple ways to meet the same objectives. This was the goal in designing and developing a multi-phase study of professional development practices and in creating a professional development module as an intervention tool to develop expertise in using the pedagogy of gifted education in general education classrooms.

The research team at the University of Connecticut (Westberg, Gubbins, Burns, & Reis, 1995) thought about learning and teaching preferences and posed the following question:

> How do we provide professional development to teachers throughout the country by creating training materials for others to use within their own school districts?

We created an intervention with the ultimate goal of making it available to others interested in using a set of strategies that represent some of the pedagogical principles of gifted education that will offer challenging learning opportunities for all students. We studied various gifted and talented models and systems of designing and developing teaching and learning models and curricular approaches. We reviewed recommended practices in general education and thought about how

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we could make them more appropriate for gifted students whose academic needs surpass those of their peers in one or more content areas. After much discussion and debate among our research team, we concluded that we wanted to accomplish the following in a professional development module to be used by educators:

1. Provide an overview of conceptions of intelligence or giftedness.
2. Create an analytical approach to studying, critiquing, and modifying available curricula.
3. Develop a variety of assessment techniques to serve as informal and formal ways of determining students' prior knowledge.
4. Determine students' learning strengths by creating profiles of abilities, interests, and talents.
5. Design high-end learning opportunities for students by matching academic needs to curricular and instructional options.
6 Offer enrichment opportunities for students to engage in developing solutions to real-world problems that require long-term involvement to impact the pre-selected audience.

Our goals were lofty; however, we knew that our combined professional experiences would be an asset. Our prior teaching emphasized the following:

- overarching concepts, big ideas, or themes;
- learning how to learn skills, including research skills, critical and creative thinking skills, and communication skills;
- student generated problem-based learning opportunities, which require an analysis of issues, problems, or concerns that engage the attention of an individual or a small group of students;
- preference for students thinking and working like practicing professionals; and
- focus on the continued growth of self-esteem and self-concept.

We also recognized the difference between schooling and education so well stated by Brandwein and Morholt (1986): "The gifted young . . . experience both *schooling* (intended learning moderated by the community) and *education* (unplanned learning often at individual risk)" (p. 23). We wanted all students in general education classrooms to experience schooling and education. We understood that not all students would experience the same thing, in the same way, and at the same time. In designing a professional development module, we wanted to ensure the following:

1. Challenging curricula were available.
2. Curricular options were in response to learning needs.
3. Students' research interests guided extensions of curricula.
4. The learning/teaching dynamic was central to teacher and student change.

Next, we had to figure out how to accomplish all of these goals. As professional developers and teachers ourselves, we often shared information through lectures, small and large group discussions, simulations, videos, slides, and transparencies highlighting main points, examples, and definitions. Conference attendees, workshop participants, and students had opportunities to read, listen, talk, role play, and write. Given our experiences, we approached the idea of creating a professional development module the same way we would normally design training materials. We wanted to ensure that the module provided sufficient details for educators who were novices in their understanding and experience with gifted and talented education. We also wanted experts to recognize how they could make modifications or extensions of the materials to suit their high level of familiarity with curriculum development based on learners' needs and the education of gifted and talented students. The steps in this process of creating, refining, piloting, and implementing the final version of the professional development module are fully explained in Gubbins et al., (2002).

Upon completion of the research study of *Maximizing the Effects of Professional Development Practices to Extend Gifted Education Pedagogy to Regular Education Program*, we, once again, reviewed and revised the intervention materials. The intervention became known as the "big red notebook" because of its packaging. Within a 4 in., 3-ring, red notebook, there is a brief history of various viewpoints on intelligence and giftedness; guidelines for assessing the quality, relevance, and comprehensiveness of current curricula; approaches

to altering the depth and breadth of curriculum; techniques for creating learner profiles with the ultimate goal of improved achievement; and detailed suggestions and prototypes for designing enrichment learning and teaching opportunities beyond what is available in classrooms.

*Applying Gifted Education Pedagogy in the General Education Classroom* (Burns et al., 2002) or the "big red notebook" is now available to the public. The five goals of this professional development module include:

1. Explore a developmental conception of giftedness; discuss your personal perspective.
2. Identify relevant gifted education services for the general education classroom.
3. Review the components of an exemplary lesson or curriculum unit. Use curriculum development or remodeling strategies to analyze and improve a traditional lesson to increase challenge, authenticity, and active learning.
4. Identify student differences and use strategies to accommodate various learning levels of prior knowledge, interests, motivation, communication preferences, cognitive skills, and learning styles.
5. Provide enrichment activities and options to extend various curriculum units and address talent development, intrinsic motivation, and self-directed learning. (Burns et al., 2002, p. 2)

Individuals or groups interested in a professional development experience that is carefully articulated will find that the "big red notebook" promotes the notion that districts can develop expertise in gifted and talented education by using this module with staff members. One or more teachers can set a goal of becoming the district's or school's professional developer in applying gifted education pedagogy to all students. The professional development module consists of background information for the presenter, an overview of the mission of The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, and a preface that explains why the "big red notebook" will be a useful resource in response to questions such as:

1. How do we meet the needs of gifted and talented students who spend the majority of their time in general education classrooms?
2. How do we nurture the talents and abilities of all students?
3. How will strategies and practices designed to modify, differentiate, and enrich curricula escalate the challenge level for all students?

These questions are addressed through the use of 89 transparencies, presenter notes, suggested explanations for the content of each transparency, activities for audience involvement, activity pages to practice and reinforce the application of strategies and skills, and selected resources. The "big red notebook" is a self-contained learning opportunity that promotes comprehensive gifted education programs that offer:

- Services for students who already possess strong cognitive and academic abilities.
- Services to promote the development of strengths, cognitive abilities, intrinsic motivation, effort, talents, and optimal learning for all students.
- Services that address social, emotional, and career-based concerns and issues.
- Services in the classroom, special programs, and in the community. (Burns et al., 2002, p. 10)

An example of the transparency content and script illustrates how we described "Indicators of Differentiation" (see next page).

Developing and implementing research in schools requires commitment, resources, and a willingness to support growth and change. Our theory-based research study of *Maximizing the Effects of Professional Development Practices to Extend Gifted Education Pedagogy to Regular Education Program* allowed schools time to experiment with strategies designed to improve learning opportunities for teachers and their students. Participating districts that served as The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRC/GT) research sites followed carefully outlined research protocols during the pilot phase of the classroom intervention and the longitudinal research study of modifying, differentiating, and enriching curricula. Experiences of administrators, teachers, and students definitely

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improved the 2002 version of the "big red notebook." We extend our gratitude to each and every person involved in this study; this was truly a collaborative effort to test, refine, and adapt research-based practices in elementary and middle school classrooms. Through the use of the 2002 "BIG RED NOTEBOOK" or *Applying Gifted Education Pedagogy in the General Education Classroom: Professional Development Module* (Burns et al.) interested educators will have opportunities to read, listen, talk, role play, and write as they develop local expertise in using the pedagogy of gifted education in general education classrooms and providing students opportunities to experience "schooling and education."

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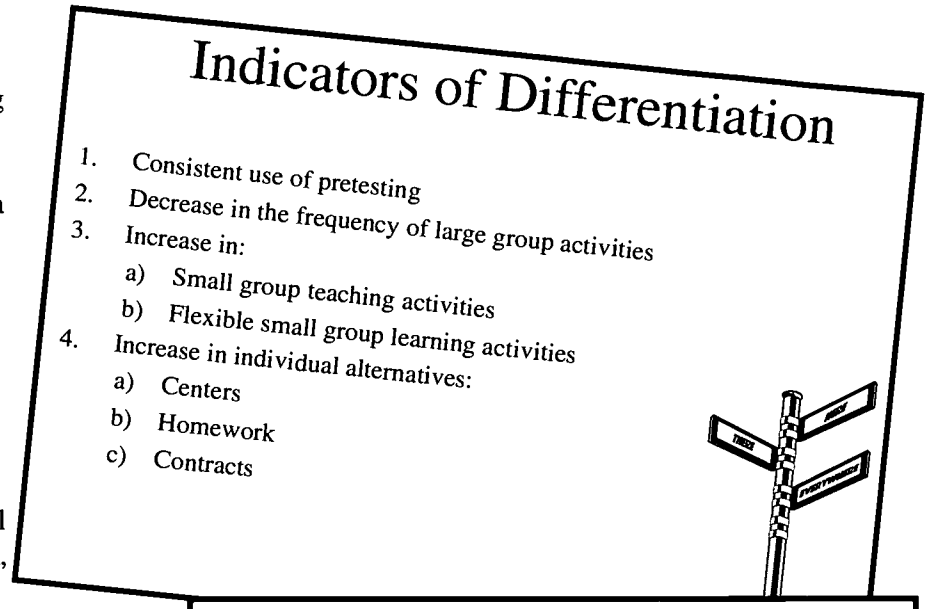


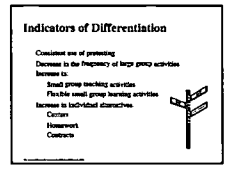

## Indicators of Differentiation

### Paraphrase This Information for the Participants:

- For the purposes of this presentation, we are making a distinction between differentiation and interest-based enrichment. Differentiation involves teacher-generated changes to improve the match between the regular curriculum and the needs of individual learners. Interest-based enrichment supplants the regular curriculum by offering students the opportunity to engage in interest-based activities related to their talent areas or to the curriculum.
- Unlike the individualization practices prevalent in the 1970s, we are not suggesting that teachers abandon all large group teaching and learning activities. Instead, the increased use of differentiation strategies should alter the percentage of time in which students are engaged in various large group, small group, or individual learning activities.
- Current research suggests that 90% of the activities in the "average" classroom involve large groups of students. In a classroom where the teacher regularly practices differentiation strategies, we would expect: (a) frequent use of pretesting for the expressed purpose of identifying potential differences among students, (b) a decrease, but not an elimination of, large group teaching activities, (c) large group activities to introduce or culminate a unit, or when no apparent differences influence student learning, and (d) an increase in small group teaching and an increase in small group learning activities. In addition, each teaching or learning group would be conducting different activities, for the expressed purpose of increasing student achievement.
- If students rotate between teaching and learning groups, and there are three such groups to handle the differences among the students, a third activity is necessary to implement this rotation. Many teachers find that the use of centers, homework, or contracts not only fulfills this need for a third rotation activity, these activities also encourage student independence and self-directed learning.

### Suggested Activities to Promote Audience Participation:

- Ask participants to discuss the following: the prevalence of differentiation activities in their school; the frequency with which they use various differentiation strategies; the indicators on this transparency that are of greatest interest to them; and how the use of small groups, expressly for the purpose of differentiation, might differ from the use of small groups used with cooperative learning strategies.

## Awards and Honors

Dr. Elena Grigorenko, Deputy Director of the PACE Center at Yale University, was the recipient of the APA Division of Development Psychology Boyd McCandless Early Career Award. This award is Dr. Grigorenko's third divisional early career award from the APA.

# Counseling Gifted and Talented Students

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## Introduction

I began my work in gifted education with a focus on counseling needs in 1973 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison shortly after the Marland Report (1972), which brought gifted students to the consciousness of the nation. At that time, counseling and the focus on social-emotional needs was a rarity. Almost all attention was focused on identification issues and academic programming issues. As the years have passed, identification and academic programming have maintained their importance, and at times were overshadowed by issues such as teacher training, gender, ethnicity, inclusion, genetics vs. environment, and IQ vs. multiple forms of intelligences. Throughout these years of musical chairs regarding the in issue, the social-emotional needs of gifted has continued to be a solid, expanding concern, but never the star.

In 1973 you could count on one finger all the leaders in gifted education who made counseling issues their primary focus. In 2002 there is considerably more respect and attention for the social-emotional issues regarding gifted children (i.e., attention to counseling needs) than previously. A good example of today's attention on social-emotional issues is the publication of the NAGC book by Neihart, Reis, Robinson, and Moon (2002) titled *The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Children: What Do We Know?*

My research throughout the years has focused on several areas, but I have remained connected to counseling issues and social-emotional development. A brief summary follows, highlighting my research as well as my clinical insights based on years of working in counseling situations with students, parents, and educators.

## Insights/Perspectives

A defining characteristic of counselors is their use of the qualifiers "seems" and "appears." For example, "It seems that Lisa is angry." "It appears that David is underachieving as a way to get attention." A counselor recognizes that an individual is complex and a composite of apparent paradoxes and thus does not want to make definitive statements that can be challenged. Gifted students, if nothing else, are complex. However, it does no good to pretend there are certain things we do not know when we do. Currently, we know considerably more about the social-emotional issues confronting gifted students based on research and clinical observation. To know something in the scientific sense does not mean it is an absolute or that it holds in a particular way in all circumstances. If this became a standard, we would know nothing. Scientific knowledge is an understanding of patterns and dispositions with the recognition that there are exceptions to all that we know about human behavior and development. As our research improves, exceptions become just that, rather than indices of the absence of a knowledge base. The following insights are based on a synthesis of research as well as my own observations/work over the past nearly three decades.

- Gifted students are typically as well adjusted as other peers.
- Social-emotional issues are present because of exceptional ability.
- In our society it is not smart to be smart.
- Meeting the cognitive needs of gifted students often meets simultaneously their social-emotional needs.
- Teenage years are the most difficult socially for gifted students.
- To be a gifted minority student is an added social challenge for these students.
- Intelligence is no assurance of character.
- Gifted students are not prone to suicide in any greater numbers than other students in their age group.
- Depression, anxiety, and isolation are among the common difficulties with gifted students.
- Gifted students do not have lower or more inflated self-concepts than nongifted age peers.
- Gifted students are more sensitive to the social needs of their nongifted peers than the reverse.
- The messages that students receive from society about exceptional talent are only ambivalent in regards to intellectual talent.

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- Underachievement in schools by gifted students is a manifestation of a combination of social-psychological tensions.
- Parents do not always know what is best for their gifted children.
- It is possible to be gifted and disabled (or have a disorder) simultaneously.
- Children benefit from counselors as part of their development in schools. Gifted students get less than their share of counselor time and attention.

## Self-Concept

The self-concept construct has deep historical roots in psychology and education. Self-concept can be viewed as a "powerful system of cognitive structures that is quite likely to mediate interpretation of and response to events and behaviors directed at or involving the individual" (Nurius, 1986, p. 435).

A number of studies (see Neihart, 1999) have indicated that there are no differences between gifted and nongifted students on measures of self-concept. Self-concept needs to be viewed as multidimensional (Colangelo & Assouline, 1995, 2000) and changes with schooling. Colangelo and Assouline (1995) found that:

- self-concept of gifted students is lower in high school than elementary school
- as gifted students progress in school they become more anxious and isolated
- gifted students have higher self-concepts in academic domains, and lower in interpersonal domains.

Closely related to self-concept is how students view their own giftedness. A study by Kerr, Colangelo, and Gaeth (1988) indicated that giftedness is seen by teenagers as a positive when it came to personal understanding and to performance in academics. However, they saw giftedness as a negative when it came to relations with peers.

Positive self-concept is associated with challenge-seeking, willingness to do hard work, take risks, and accuracy in evaluating one's performance (Neihart et al., 2002).

## At-risk Students

Gifted students are vulnerable to a number of issues and situations that can hamper their cognitive as well as affective development. Gifted students are vulnerable to underachievement, defined as school attainment considerably below ability level (Neihart et al., 2002). The outcome of underachievement is always the same—performance below expectation. However, the reasons and sources for underachievement are varied and complex. They include social isolation, pressure to conform, under-curriculum, family dynamics, rebelliousness, learning/behavioral disabilities, attention-seeking, trauma, deliberate underachievement, and lack of goals and direction (Colangelo, Kerr, Christensen, & Maxey, 1993; Neihart et al., 2002; Peterson & Colangelo, 1996; Reis, 1998; Rimm, 1997).

There is concern about suicide and delinquency among gifted. The traumatic effects of suicide do not rely on numbers—one suicide is catastrophic. While the numbers of suicide among gifted are in no greater number than for other students (Neihart et al., 2002), counselors need to recognize signs and actively intervene for any student who appears at risk. Gifted students who are isolated, anxious, depressed, can be at risk for suicide. A cry for help must be heeded (Gust-Brey & Cross, 1999).

The research on delinquency among gifted students, like that on suicide, suggests no higher incidence than among other youngsters. Psychological problems can manifest themselves into anti-social and illegal behavior. Especially in the teenage environment, acceptance trumps reason and safety. There is some information based on self-reports by gifted students that they commit offenses, but are seldom caught or taken to court (Neihart et al., 2002; Seeley, 1984).

The research on minority students has been rather consistent indicating that minorities (except for Asian-Americans) are underrepresented in gifted programs. African-Americans, Latinos, and Native-Americans are well aware of their minority presence in gifted programs and are conflicted about their participation in such programs. A most unfortunate phenomenon afflicts minority students and that is the association of academic excellence (e.g., gifted program) with "acting White" (Colangelo, 2001; McWorther, 2000). Gifted minority students deal with all the issues that other gifted students deal with and additionally, the ethnic issues of whether they

belong in such programs and how they will be viewed by their ethnic group if they participate. We are missing highly capable minority students because they are conflicted about wanting to be found or identified.

### Family Counseling

The family has been recognized as a primary and critical component in the development of talent (Bloom, 1985; Moon & Hall, 1998; Moon, Jurich, & Feldhusen 1998). Although research and writings have increased in the last 20 years (Colangelo & Assouline, 1995; Moon & Hall, 1998; Moon, Jurich, & Feldhusen, 1998), counseling with families of gifted is still an area of exceptional need and challenge. High ability students tend to come from families that are cohesive, child-centered, authoritative, and in which parents engage with their children (Neihart et al., 2002). By no mean does this mean that gifted children do not emanate from families that do not fit those descriptors (Colangelo & Assouline, 1995; Moon & Hall, 1998).

One of the important roles that parents assume is a relationship with their child's school. Parents of gifted children do not always have the skills to advocate effectively for their children, nor the interpersonal skills to work well with school personnel. Parents are not always prepared to take on the challenge of a child who has different needs.

The identification of one child in a family as gifted changes the dynamics with other siblings who are not identified. Research has indicated that labeling a child gifted can have negative effects on siblings (Colangelo & Brower, 1987; Cornell & Grossberg, 1986; Grenier, 1985).

### Transition From High School to College and Career Counseling

Gifted students do not always know what they want to do for the rest of their lives and intelligence does not necessarily translate into planning skills for college and career. Many gifted students will experience difficulty at this stage because of multipotentiality (Rysiew, Shore, & Carson, 1994). Rysiew, Shore, and Leeb (1998) outline some of the main concerns in addressing mulitpotentiality:

1. Students find it hard to narrow their choices to one career since they have so many equally viable options.
2. Multipotential students may also suffer from perfectionism, thus they look for the perfect or ideal career.
3. Students feel coerced from parents and others to make decisions based on status and high earning potential.
4. Students must make commitments that may have long-term schooling (graduate, professional) and a delay of independence in terms of earning a salary as well as starting families. These long-term training investments are also emotionally perhaps, or financially difficult to change once a student has embarked for several years towards a particular career, even if there are serious doubts about the chosen career path.

A review of research and writings on career development of gifted students recommends the following for counselors (see Rysiew, Shore, & Leeb, 1998):

1. Remind students that they do not have to limit themselves to one career.
2. Use leisure activities as a way to continually develop areas of abilities and interest, apart from one's career.
3. Use career counseling as a value-based activity, exploring broad categories of life satisfaction.
4. Emphasize peer discussions and group work with other multipotential youth so that one can see that he/she is not alone with concerns.

Some gifted students have very focused career interests at an early age while others do not develop them until late high school or start of college. Research does not indicate an advantage to either. Career counseling should emphasize rigorous academic preparation and high aspirations (Neihart et al., 2002) since that will keep options open. Gifted students will eventually find their passion or niche—keeping options open is important. Research has indicated that females and minorities of high ability do not always have aspirations and career goals that are high and consistent with their abilities (Kerr, 1991; Neihart et al., 2002).

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## Counseling in Schools

While there are counselors and therapists in private practice or working in community outreach centers, no counselor will be in as much contact with gifted students as the school counselor. School is still the place where giftedness (for the most part) will either flourish or not. School counselors receive little specific training on the affective needs of gifted students and it is the very rare counselor training program that requires counselors to take a course on gifted students as a degree requirement. Thus school counselors are grounded in counseling but not in theories of giftedness.

Counseling in schools can be envisioned as either remedial or developmental. In remedial counseling, the emphasis is on problem solving and crisis intervention. With this approach the counselor is a therapist who helps correct problems. In developmental counseling, the counselor also has a therapist role, but the primary function is to establish an environment in school that is conducive to the educational (cognitive and affective) growth of gifted students.

## Final Comments

Counseling gifted students and their families is one of the most challenging and rewarding functions for a counselor. Gifted students have tremendous variability not only in their cognitive capacity, but in their affective development. While there are clearly common themes to the social-emotional issues confronting gifted students, there are profound individual differences among gifted students. The business of school counselors is to help young people recognize who they are, make decisions, and develop their potential. Gifted students need the assistance and nurturing counselors can provide. It will be a sign of effective schooling when counselors regularly use their skills and expertise with gifted and talented students in their schools.

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Society's Role in Educating Gifted Students: The Role of Public Policy (*Gallagher, J. J.*)

Middle School Classrooms: Teachers' Reported Practices and Student Perceptions (*Moon, T. R., Callahan, C. M., Tomlinson, C. A., & Miller, E. M.*)

Assessing and Advocating for Gifted Students: Perspectives for School and Clinical Psychologists (*Robinson, N. M.*)

Giftedness and High School Dropouts: Personal, Family, and School Related Factors (*Renzulli, J. S., & Park, S.*)

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Applying Gifted Education Pedagogy in the General Education Classroom: Professional Development Module (*Burns, D. E., Gubbins, E. J., Reis, S. M., & others*)

# Challenging Schools' Expectations of Native American Students

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The under-representation of Native American students in urban public school programs for the gifted and talented is alarming. Recent research continues to document the wide disparity between the ethnic group representation of Native Americans in the general public school student population and the significantly lower percentages represented in programs for the gifted and talented. This is true at the national, state, district, and individual school levels (Bussanich, Gustafson, Jones, & Raborn, 1997).

### Rationale

Why should educators care about the under-identification and placement of Native American students in public school programs for the gifted and talented? According to Tomlinson, Callahan, and Lelli (1997), "minority students, particularly those from low-income backgrounds, are typically underrepresented in programs for the gifted" (p. 5). It is important for educators to challenge the apparent perception that talent does not exist at the same level for mainstream and culturally diverse learners. One way that this might be accomplished is through the expansion of opportunities for economically disadvantaged and minority children with exceptional talent through participation in programs with advanced learning experiences. To encourage this, the U.S. Department of Education report, *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent* (1993), proposed that schools support research and demonstration projects for working with children in diverse populations and eliminate barriers to the participation of children from culturally diverse groups in services for the gifted and talented.

### The Solution

During the 1993-1994 school year, a program was designed at a large urban elementary school to address the needs of Native American and already identified gifted students. The program was open to

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all current gifted students and Native American third, fourth, and fifth grade students. Based partly upon Renzulli's Enrichment Cluster concept (Renzulli, 1994; Renzulli & Reis, 1985), the program met after school and for half days for 3 to 6 week sessions during the summer. Participants attended on a voluntary basis. General program goals were developed to teach and expose the student participants to learning experiences in the areas of science and technology, mathematics, career exploration, cultural pride and identity, and leadership and social skills development. It was hoped that such a program would also serve as a catalyst to increase the numbers of Native American students referred, tested, qualified, and placed in the school's gifted education program. Finally, the program sought to instill an enthusiasm in the students for learning while also increasing the participation of their families in the school community.

## Program Design

After school activities were presented in a thematic fashion. Students would sign-in and gather for a large group opening activity designed to promote a sense of community through team-building. This would be followed by a longer subject-based skill-building activity (either math, science, or culturally focused). Snacks and a recreational period were followed by a closing activity and debriefing session. Central topics or themes were also selected for each of the summer sessions. "Our Dreams," the theme chosen for one summer session, for example, provided group activities in the interpretation of dreams from the "western" and Native American point-of-view. It was lead by a Native American female psychologist with a personal and professional interest in dream research. In addition to keeping a daily personal dream journal, students discussed topics such as what constitutes a dream, why dreams are important, and how dreams are viewed in both Western and Native American culture. The students concluded the unit by creating and making their own dream-catchers. Additional units on creative writing involving poetry and other forms of written and visual expression, storytelling, and the creation of personalized Apache pouches, were also offered during that summer session.

A final and significant component of the program focused on family participation. Families were always invited and encouraged to attend and participate in all program activities. A special event, called Family Night, was held every semester. During this evening, a large potluck dinner was provided followed by an engaging activity. Some of the activities presented included "The Magic of Science," "How Your Student Can Succeed at School," and "Native American Drumming."

## Program Participants

Native American students comprised 11.8 % of the school's general student population and 0% of the school's gifted education program population. As a group, Native American students were not experiencing overall academic success at the school. A very large number were placed in remedial and special education programs. Few participated in extracurricular activities. The enrichment program coordinators believed that the Native American students had more than enough ability to be successful. The school just needed to provide an appropriate opportunity for them to succeed.

Sixteen students participated in the school's gifted education program. The program's ethnic breakdown included a majority of Anglo students (13), three Hispanic students, and no Native American students. The school's general student population breakdown by ethnicity included: Anglo 40.0%, Hispanic 39.5%, Native American 11.8%, Black 5.8%, Asian 1.4%, and Other 1.7%. Many of the gifted students were not as successful socially as they were academically. A number of them were working on their Individual Education Plan goals related to improving social and leadership skills. The enrichment program coordinators believed that the gifted students could learn to work more cooperatively, increase appropriate social skills, and become more tolerant of differences in others with increased interactions with the Native American students.

Finally, it was realized that each individual had much to offer and to share with one another. It was believed that if a program were to provide an atmosphere whereby these "gifts" could be shared, the students would continue not only to build upon their strengths, but could also develop new skills.

## Results

Data were collected over a 6 year period beginning in 1993. Information on the overall effectiveness of the

program was obtained from school and district reports, student participation surveys, parent/guardian surveys, program coordinator surveys, report cards, program attendance records, student observations, and program awards and recognition. The results indicate that a total of 27 Native American students were referred for and received gifted education testing. Nineteen of these students were identified and placed in the school's gifted education program. The general Native American student population for the 6 years studied ranged from 11% to 16%, while the percentage of gifted program Native American participants during that same period ranged from 20% to 35%. It is important to note that none of these students were referred by program coordinators for gifted screening. Referrals were made either by the general classroom teacher, parents, or both.

Data collected and analyzed from a variety of sources indicated that students who participated in the program experienced a positive increase in the areas of leadership and social-emotional growth and development. Every respondent (i.e., student, parent/guardian, and coordinator) indicated on yearly surveys that the program was overwhelmingly successful and should be continued. Program attendance records kept on a week-by-week and year-by-year basis indicated that participants attended at a rate of over 90%. The mobility rate for program participants was approximately 10% compared to that of 59.0% (Albuquerque Public Schools, 1999) for the general school population. Participants were also most likely to remain at the school and in the program until they graduated to middle school. The program received numerous awards and recognition, including the 1997 New Mexico Quality in Education Award given to the most outstanding elementary education program in the state.

## Conclusion

By creating an enrichment program that maximized opportunities for success for each and every student, the program transcended expectations: expectations by the students themselves, by their parents and families, and by the school community as a whole. The bar was raised. In doing so, the program elevated not only how these students felt about themselves, but also about how the school felt about them. The program highlights the need for all Native American students to be challenged with high level thinking activities and underscores the importance of providing a community style environment for their academic success. The significance of this statement cannot be overstated. As Native American families make the transition from reservation life to city life, the loss of sense of community is frequently cited as one of their most difficult adjustments required of them. The program also sought to emphasize the inner strength of each Native American student and to support each student in the outward expression of his/her personality.

The non-Native American identified gifted students have also benefited from their participation in the program. As a group, many of these students tended to be highly verbal and independent. A number of them exhibited the need to learn to work cooperatively with others. Several of them experienced a tremendous amount of growth in their leadership and social-emotional skills and abilities. Their participation in the program allowed them opportunities to both share and receive "gifts" from their Native American peers. Most of them displayed a newfound respect for the Native American culture. This carried over outside the program into the classroom and onto the playground as well.

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# Assessing and Advocating for Gifted Students: Perspectives for School and Clinical Psychologists

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## Introduction

Gifted children are an ill-served group of special-needs students. Few psychologists have had training in addressing their needs, and even those who are trained usually must turn most of their attention to students with disabilities and/or mental health concerns. As a result, gifted children are often subjected to a critical mismatch with their educational environments, with multiple consequences for their learning and attainment, their motivation, and their personal adjustment. This article summarizes research about the assessment of academically gifted students in the context of the author's clinical experience and addresses the kinds of advocacy a psychologist can offer (see Robinson, 2002 for complete research monograph).

## Definition and Levels of Giftedness

In comparison with other diagnostic categories, there exists no clear definition of giftedness. Indeed, the group is highly diverse in the domains and levels of their abilities as well as their personal characteristics. Although there is no firm agreement on a definition, nor about the meanings attached to *gifts* and *talents*, the most widely accepted definition of *giftedness* stresses performance, or potential for performance, at remarkably high levels of accomplishment, resulting in a need for services not ordinarily provided in the schools (U.S. Department of Education, 1993). States and school districts often adopt somewhat arbitrary operational criteria to designate whom they will serve, and it is those rules that govern the tests and scores that are locally acceptable (in conjunction with other evidence such as portfolios and behavior ratings) and create local *de facto* operational definitions.

Just as no consensus exists with regard to a definition, none exists with regard to terms to be used for levels of giftedness. Leaving aside the terms suggested in test manuals, probably the most frequent terms that applied in this field to *test scores* are "mildly gifted" (115-129), "moderately gifted" (130-144), "highly gifted" (145-159), and "exceptionally gifted" (160+), which relate to standard deviation units on the normal curve. Very high scores are to be expected very infrequently. For example, IQs above 130 are expected in 2/100 students, but IQs above 160, only in 3/100,000.

## Characteristics of Gifted Students

If all is going well with a gifted student, one is likely to see tell-tale signs of advancement such as the following:

- Rapid learning, at an earlier age than classmates
- Intellectual passions—intense curiosity and deep interests
- Exceptional reasoning and memory
- Frequent step-skipping in problem-solving and unexpected strategies
- Capacity for reasoning on an abstract level; sometimes rejecting hands-on instruction (or, conversely, preferring visual-spatial to verbal mode)
- Pleasure in posing original, difficult questions
- Ideas that sound "off the wall," but are the product of divergent thinking
- Advanced sense of humor; making puns that other children do not "get"
- Reaching for excellence; perfectionism that can be asset or liability
- Greater personal maturity than exhibited by classmates
- Concerns like those of older students'
- Mature notions of friendship and disappointment when friends do not reciprocate their yearning for stability, loyalty, and intimacy.

But if the educational setting is under-challenging or if something at home or in peer relationships is going wrong, then you may see:

*Externalizing issues* such as

- Impatience, irritability, negativity, arrogance
- What appears to be AD/HD, but is merely the result of boredom
- Bossiness; dominance of class discussion

- Hypersensitivity about perceived injustices
- Refusal to do "busy work" or "baby stuff"
- Low tolerance for truly challenging material

*Internalizing issues such as*

- Underachievement (which may arise from other causes as well)
- Inattention to classroom activities; daydreaming; "sneak reading"
- Somatic problems on school days only; crying and tantrums at home
- Desperate attempts to be "just like everyone else"
- Lack of *joi de vivre* if not outright depression.

Like all other students, gifted students need challenges matched to their pace and level of learning. A differentiated curriculum will benefit all students in a classroom, and includes compacting (assessment of a student's mastery of material before it is taught, to avoid wasting time on what is already known); classroom practices that employ flexible grouping, tiered assignments, and encouragement of independence; and, for more competent students, substitution of more advanced work, deepening understanding, drawing connections, and applying knowledge to the real world.

As the professional who is likely to have the most comprehensive information about the student and the schools, the psychologist is often in a special position to act as advocate in partnership with parents and teachers.

## Educational Options for Gifted Students

It is useful to distinguish between activities that make a *fundamental adjustment* in the student's regular school day, and those that are *complementary* to it. Distinctions between *accelerative options* (adjusting the pace and level of instruction) and *enrichment options* (extending the curriculum only). A smorgasbord of educational options for gifted students exists, including a variety of home schooling alternatives, in addition to those listed in the Table 1 (see next page).

## Situations Calling for the Psychologist's Involvement

Assessment is never warranted unless it will make a difference in a youngster's life. In the absence of any referral question, testing simply to obtain a score is always inappropriate. There are, however, a number of situations in which assessment of a gifted child's abilities and skills can make a difference:

- Help with parenting
- Educational planning by parents (guiding development at home and school)
- Determining eligibility for a program (the most frequent reason for testing gifted students, although often the test is group-administered)
  - Cognitive testing (ability and achievement)
  - Visual-spatial testing (generally not effective as a selection tool)
  - Creativity as a qualification for services (discouraged as a qualifier)
- Determining needed adjustments in the school curriculum and school placement (including acceleration)
- Assessing "twice exceptional" children with learning disabilities who may achieve on grade level
  - Labeling may bring understanding and services
  - It is often difficult to differentiate between "normal" asynchrony of abilities, and learning disabilities
  - Writing disability is perhaps the most common in gifted students
  - Most gifted children love to read, and those who do not may have subtle problems
  - Whether a student with a learning disability should be offered a special program for gifted students must be decided on a highly individual basis
- Exploring behavioral issues, including arrogant, hard-to-teach students; those with inattention, impulsivity, and/or hyperactivity; those whose performance is declining or chronically low; students succumbing to peer pressure; students with depression; and students with social interaction deficits
- Describing the attainments of exceedingly bright students who are so significantly advanced that their talents are masked in the school setting.

## Comprehensive Assessment of Gifted Students

A comprehensive assessment of gifted students goes far beyond testing. Although psychologists working

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Table 1.

A Smorgasbord of Educational Options for Gifted Students.

| | Acceleration | Enrichment |
|---|---|---|
| Early childhood | | |
| | Older preschool group (full- or part-day) | Excursions, activities |
| | Early kindergarten entrance | |
| Elementary school | | |
| | Special school for gifted | |
| | Self-contained class with acceleration | Pull-out program |
| | In-class compacting/acceleration | In-class extensions |
| | Grade-skipping | Clubs, contests |
| | Cross-grade grouping (Joplin Plan) | Junior Great Books |
| | Multi-grade classrooms | All-school enrichment groups |
| | Part-day placement in higher class | Summer programs |
| | Cluster grouping with acceleration | Cluster grouping with enrich. |
| Secondary school | | |
| | Special schools for gifted | Selective boarding schools |
| | Grade-advanced courses | Honors courses |
| | Distance learning classes | Usual pre-International Baccalaureate courses |
| | Math-science high schools | |
| | International Baccalaureate courses/exams | Mentorships |
| | Summer credit courses | Foreign exchange year |
| | Advanced Placement courses/exams | Special-interest clubs |
| | Dual high-school/college | Contests |
| | Early college entry | Internships |
| College | | |
| | Selective colleges/universities | |
| | Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate credits | Honors classes |
| | | Degree with honors |
| | Credits earned through dual enrollment | Double majors |
| | Taking exams to earn credit without taking course | Research projects |
| | | Mentorships |
| | Graduate courses while undergraduate | Junior year abroad |
| | Co-terminal MA (BA + MA in 4 yrs) | |

in school settings will seldom be able to attain this ideal, because of too-heavy case loads, and even those in private practice will have limits on their time, it is important to keep the complexity of the issues in mind. Elements of a comprehensive assessment include:

- Clarifying the referral
- Gathering school information and school records
- Conducting a comprehensive parent interview covering their concerns; evidence of advancment; child's history, skills, characteristics, interests, and activities; parents' philosophies and parenting skills; parental history including extended family; and information about other professionals who may be involved
- Conversing with the child about views of sameness and difference from classmates

and friends; view of school and how it might be improved; and what and how he/she would like to learn
- Testing, including intellectual and achievement, and measures of social adjustment and maturity.

### Testing Gifted Students

Because of limited resources, group testing is often the method districts must use. Individual tests are, however, thought to be more nearly accurate. It is important to use current tests with sufficient range and high ceilings, resorting to tests standardized for older students if necessary. The nature of the tests should fit the program. Since most special programs are highly verbal, the tests should probably be verbal as well. In an effort to increase diversity in enrollment, many districts have adopted the use of visual-spatial tests, but these tests often are a poor fit for the actual programs provided.

"Tricks of the trade" in testing gifted children include a flexible use of basals and ceilings, minimizing timed tests, starting tests at a higher entry point than usual for the student's age, and recognizing limitations in the reliability of high scores. The tester should also be prepared to see substantial discrepancies among subtests and domains as a "normal" aspect of giftedness, and to see discrepancies in results between reasoning tests and those more dependent on instruction.

The psychologist should also be prepared for special situations not usually encountered with non-gifted students. These include personality issues such as students who are used to knowing all the answers and who are fragile in the face of challenges; students who are realistically anxious about the outcome of high-stakes testing; perfectionistic or meticulous students; and students who hate to give up before they get an answer, either because they are so excited by the challenge or because of their strong academic work ethic. The psychologist will also need to be prepared to deal with highly gifted students, very young students, and even the rare student who has been coached or recently tested with the same instrument.

### Testing Children of Underserved Minorities and/or Ethnically Isolated Groups

Contemporary tests are carefully developed and monitored to keep them from being "biased" in the way that is ordinarily thought they are—that is, unduly tilted for or against a particular ethnic group. True bias in testing means that the same score has different implications or predictive value for members of one group than another. Generally speaking, that is not the case with the tests we use today. And yet, real-life circumstances have made it much more difficult for economically and socially stressed parents to bring children up in an optimal fashion, consistent with their developing into gifted students. There have been a number of efforts to find alternative ways to find promising students, especially those from disadvantaged minorities and those whose primary language is not English. These methods have had variable success, but the goal of increasing diversity is so important that the efforts have high priority. Professionals are in the difficult position of balancing the predictive power of the tests with the goal of enhancing diversity. Portfolio assessments, behavioral rating scales, hands-on performance tasks, and observations are among the tools being used.

### The Joys of Working with These Children

The psychologist who works with gifted children is often in for a special treat. Many of these children love adult company, are energized by the intellectual challenge, need few reminders to keep focused, "catch onto" what the psychologist is asking, enjoy the subtle jokes built into the tests, give uncommonly fresh answers, make connections between ideas, and are meta-thinkers who share their original problem-solving strategies. Their families often put to good use what the psychologist recommends. The psychologist who accepts the challenge of working with gifted—or potentially gifted—students has a special opportunity to make a significant difference not only in the life of the student, but ultimately, in our society as well.

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The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented Newsletter

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**Inside**



# NRC/GT Query: Are Programs and Services for Gifted and Talented Students Responsive to Beliefs?

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Identifying and serving gifted and talented students is practiced around the country and the world by many educators in response to professional and personal beliefs, legislation, or educational practices. For centuries, people found it critical to search for children who had the potential to contribute to self and society in such ways that they were beyond expectations of cognitive development and age. The phrase "in comparison to others" was one way to think about differences among learners. NRC/GT researchers (1997) associated with a study of professional development practices to extend gifted education strategies to all learners presented the following qualities:

- prior knowledge or skill expertise
- learning rate
- cognitive ability
- learning style preference
- motivation, attitude, and effort
- interest, strength, or talent.

If individuals differ in these ways or others, then how do we view the talents and gifts of students in our schools and classrooms? Is it a matter of defining terms, reflecting on beliefs about abilities, or providing professional development opportunities?

## Defining Terms

There is no universally accepted definition of gifted and talented, intelligence, talent development, creative productivity, or learning ability. Perhaps there should not be; however, there must be an understanding of human abilities and how they manifest themselves in school-based, community-based, and work-based settings. When a group of educators was asked recently to define some of the terms above, several definitions were offered:

> Gifted and talented means individuals have the capacity to learn that is measurably different from their same-age peers.
>
> Intelligence is a psychological construct used to describe abilities that require reasoning, wisdom, and insight.
>
> Talent development is a process of recognizing, nurturing, and supporting the skills and abilities of people who have not already demonstrated complete mastery.

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> Creative productivity is the confluence of intellectual and affective human traits directed by an individual's interests and willingness to develop a written, visual, or auditory product or performance that did not already exist in the same exact form in a specific field of study.
>
> Learning ability is a demonstrated propensity to acquire new knowledge or skills.

These suggested definitions are most likely as adequate as those proposed by researchers and theorists in psychology, human development, sociology, and education. They reflect personal and professional perspectives. Would everyone agree with each definition? Probably not. A wordsmith or two would work together until there was a general consensus on the interpretation and importance of each word and determine its implications within and across all cultural groups and at all levels of economic status.

## Reflecting on Beliefs About Abilities

Defining terms related to human abilities is a useful task, because it reveals underlying beliefs, personal biases, and multiple perspectives. Several definitions were created through national studies. In response to Public Law 91-230, Section 806(c) authored by former Senator Jacob K. Javits of New York, Sidney P. Marland, Commissioner of Education for the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, evaluated the status of education for gifted and talented children by conducting public hearings, reviewing existing Federal education programs, studying programs in representative states, convening an advisory panel, and completing a survey of states. The advisory panel established the following definition of gifted and talented:

> Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contributions to self and society.
>
> Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential in any of the following areas:
>
> 1. General intellectual ability
> 2. Specific academic aptitude
> 3. Creative or productive thinking
> 4. Leadership ability
> 5. Visual or performing arts
> 6. Psychomotor ability
>
> It can be assumed that utilization of these criteria for identification of the gifted and talented will encompass a minimum of 3 to 5 percent of the school population.
>
> Evidence of gifted and talented abilities may be determined by a multiplicity of ways. These procedures should include objective measures and professional evaluation measures which are essential components of identification.
>
> Professionally qualified persons include such individuals as teachers, administrators, school psychologists, counselors, curriculum specialists, artists, musicians, and others with special training who are also qualified to appraise pupils' special competencies. (Marland, 1972, pp. 10-11)

The advisory panel and the external review team members (including Dr. Joseph S. Renzulli, University of Connecticut, Dr. James J. Gallagher, University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill, and William G. Vassar, former Consultant on Gifted and Talented Education, Connecticut State Department of Education) also suggested three characteristics of programs to meet the needs of gifted and talented students:

1. A differentiated curriculum which denotes higher cognitive concepts and processes.
2. Instructional strategies which accommodate the learning styles of the gifted and talented and curriculum content.
3. Special grouping arrangements which include a variety of administrative procedures appropriate to particular children, i.e., special classes, honor classes, seminars, resource rooms, and the like. (Marland, 1972, p. 11)

Congress revised the Marland definition in 1978 by including pre-school, elementary, or secondary students and eliminating psychomotor ability. The emphasis on demonstrated or potential abilities

remained along with the notion of required services that are not commonly part of most school's opportunities:

> Children and, whenever applicable, youth who are identified at the pre-school, elementary, or secondary level as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, specific academic or leadership ability or in the performing and visual arts, and who by reason thereof require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school. (United States Congress, Educational Amendment of 1978 [P.L. 93-561, IX (A)])

The 1978 definition remained as is until the Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act of 1988 was passed. Modifications were made, such as replacing designated grade levels with the phrase "children and youth" and eliminating the phrase "possessing demonstrated or potential abilities."

> The term "gifted and talented" means children and youth who give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who require services by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities. (P.L. 100-297, Sec. 4130)

Defining terms was also one of many tasks undertaken by a steering group brought together by the United States Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, to revisit the prior national definition from the 1972 Marland report, later updated in 1978, and the Javits definition of 1988. The steering group shared perspectives as teachers, administrators, professors, researchers, and business people. Their perspectives were then discussed with others within and outside the Department of Education and feedback was sought as ideas were refined. As a result of all the deliberations, the following report was produced in 1993: *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent.* The report focuses on the quiet crisis in educating the Nation's most talented students. The "quiet crisis" in education reflected how we continue to neglect the talents and abilities of top students and how we continue to under-challenge many students because of preconceived limits or expectations of how they learn and apply their talents and abilities. Once again, a revised national definition was crafted:

> Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.
>
> These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools.
>
> Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor. (United States Department of Education, 1993, p. 26)

Review the definitions listed above or review your state definition. Think about your responses to the following questions:

- How do you define the characteristics of gifted and talented students?
- If you live in a state that mandates identification and programming, does the definition reflect your beliefs about students' abilities?
- What services and activities would challenge the talents and abilities of students?
- Do you know how to identify and nurture manifest, emergent, or latent talents?
- Do you have experience with students who perform at remarkably high levels?
- What is your understanding of high-level accomplishments?
- Would talents be recognized in all areas of human endeavor?
- What are your professional development needs to successfully identify gifted and talented students and provide challenging programming opportunities?

At first, these questions may seem easy to answer if you are completing the exercise by yourself. They require reflection on your personal and professional

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beliefs and in-depth understanding on the varying needs of talented students. To determine whether your responses are similar to others, organize a small group of people and ask them to share individual and group perspectives. Questions such as those listed above would be great discussion starters for professional development opportunities.

## Recognizing Professional Development Needs

The National Excellence report emphasized the importance of professional development as one step to addressing the "quiet crisis" in education:

> Teachers must receive better training in how to teach high-level curricula. They need support for providing instruction that challenges all students sufficiently. This will benefit not only students with outstanding talent but children at every academic level. (United States Department of Education, 1993, p. 3)

What would it take for teachers to respond to this "quiet crisis" and to determine the status of programs and services for gifted and talented students (see Renzulli & Reis, 1991)? The research agenda for The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented included a focus on regular classroom practices. In the early 1990s, we wanted to know the extent to which grade 3 and grade 4 teachers modified their instructional practices for average students and gifted students. Results of the national survey reported that

- 61% of the public school teachers had no training in gifted education
- 54% of the private school teachers had no training in gifted education. (Archambault et al., 1993, p. 43)

Why were these results a reality? Part of the reason for this reality is that very few universities and colleges offer courses in meeting the needs of gifted and talented students for undergraduate students. Oftentimes, future teachers are introduced to these students' special academic and affective needs during one course in special education, of which one class spends about 45 minutes dealing with the topic.
So, what are prospective teachers supposed to do? Obviously, each person can pursue learning opportunities through many techniques:

- Journals, newsletters, books
- Workshops, conferences, graduate coursework
- Observations, visitations
- Videotapes and audiotapes
- Discussion groups

These formal and informal approaches to professional development may or may not be enough for individual teachers to experiment with different strategies and practices related to teaching and learning. Teachers can be made aware of different strategies and practices, determine their relevance to their current position, and evaluate the extent to which they have a positive impact on students and teachers alike. These are not easy tasks. Typically, workshops and conferences are organized by school districts and professional organizations. Presenters are chosen for their specialty and may conduct a half-day, full day, or several days of training to a small or large group of educators. Will these educators learn and apply suggested strategies as a result of these training opportunities? It is hard to answer this question for the entire group of educators. Perhaps some will change; perhaps others will receive confirmation of their current strategies and practices; perhaps others will pursue further training; and perhaps still others will resist any change. The realities of offering opportunities to learn and apply different strategies and practices require more than a "one time only" or short term involvement in any new innovation. Scaling up a practice promoted by educators, but not fully integrated into teachers' repertoires, may result in resistance to change. Fullan (1993) describes the process of change as a result of extensive study, reflection, and review. The following "Eight Basic Lessons of the New Paradigm of Change" resulted from his work and are documented in *Change Forces: Probing the Depths of Educational Reform:*

| | |
|---|---|
| Lesson One: | You Can't Mandate What Matters (The more complex the change the less you can force it) |
| Lesson Two: | Change is a Journey not a Blueprint (Change is non-linear, loaded with uncertainty and excitement and sometimes perverse) |
| Lesson Three: | Problems are Our Friends (Problems are inevitable and you can't learn without them) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Lesson Four: | Vision and Strategic Planning Come Later (Premature visions and planning blind) |
| Lesson Five: | Individualism and Collectivism Must Have Equal Power (There are no one-sided solutions to isolation and groupthink) |
| Lesson Six: | Neither Centralization Nor Decentralization Works (Both top-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary) |
| Lesson Seven: | Connection with the Wider Environment is Critical for Success (The best organizations learn externally as well as internally) |
| Lesson Eight: | Every Person is a Change Agent (Change is too important to leave to the experts, personal mind set and mastery is the ultimate protection) (pp. 21-22) |

Fullan's lessons offer a reality check for many of us who reflect on the needs of teachers and students alike and think about how we can make the learning better. We may not have immediate answers, but there are ways to think about the types of services that would be most appropriate.

## Developing a Continuum of Services

School districts should create a continuum of local services as an exercise to determine the extent to which multiple opportunities are responsive to students' talents and abilities. Are services available to all, some, or just one student? Should services be unique to some children or just one child? What is appropriate for your school and classroom? Even, more importantly, what is your district's philosophy about meeting the needs of students? Oftentimes, a district's philosophy will state, "we want students to reach their potential." Does that sound familiar or is the phrase more of a paper promise to the students and the community? One example of an integrated continuum of services (see Figure 1) focuses on the

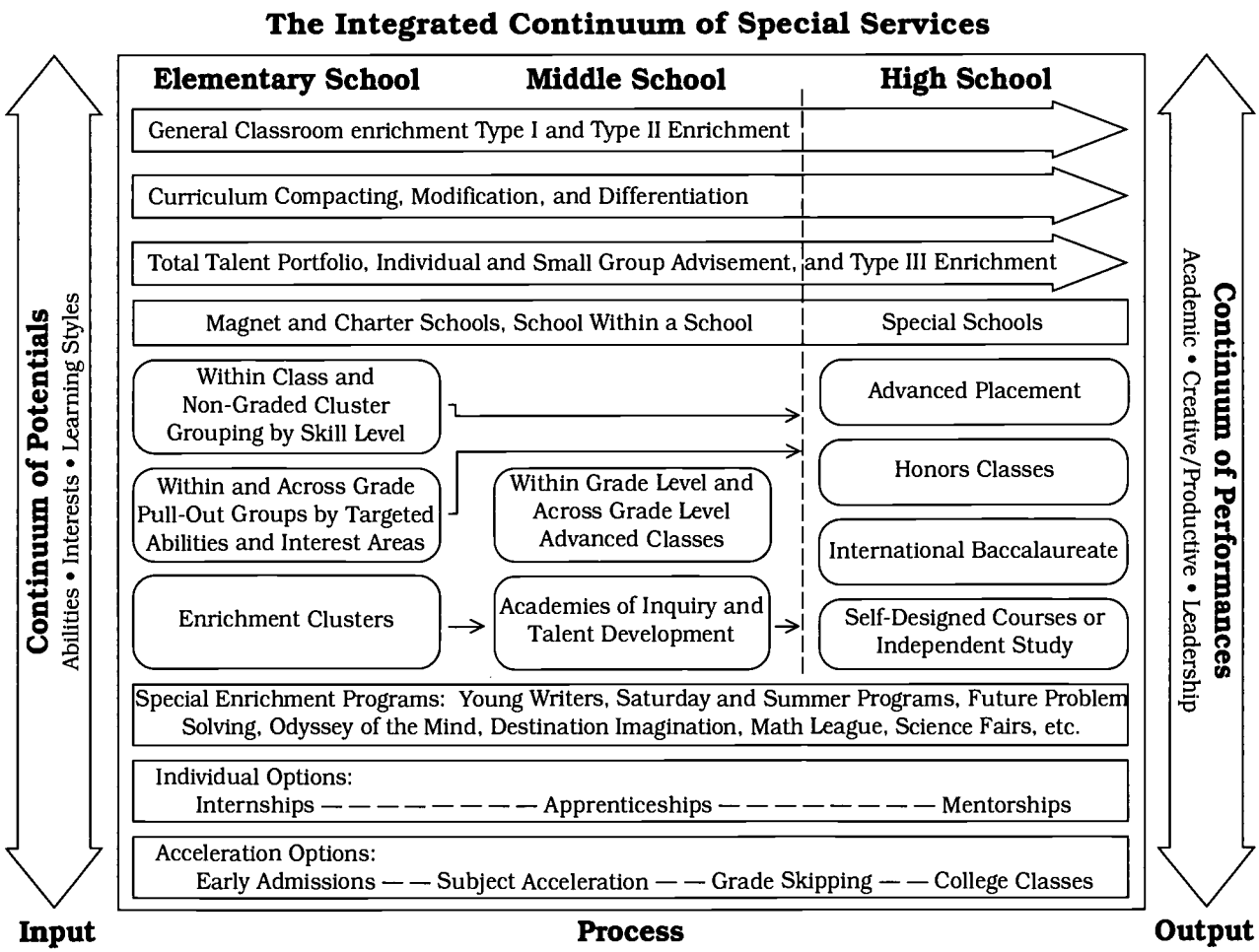


Figure 1. The continuum of services for total talent development, Renzulli & Reis, 1985, p. 25.

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specifics of programming for elementary, middle, and high school students. Note the orientation of the continuum: input, process, and output are spaced horizontally. Vertical sidebars, which are more recent additions to the 1985 diagram, emphasize the continuum of potentials (i.e., abilities, interests, and learning styles) and the continuum of performances (i.e., academic, creative productive, and leadership).

As a second exercise, change the continuum into a short questionnaire by grade level clusters (i.e., elementary, middle, and high school). Ask administrators and teachers to circle existing services. Share the information and then ask them to discuss the possibility of considering additional services.

### Continuum of Services

How many of these special services apply to your elementary school (ES), middle school (MS), and high school (HS)? Circle the appropriate school levels.

Individual Options:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ES | MS | HS | Internships |
| ES | MS | HS | Apprenticeships |
| ES | MS | HS | Mentorships |

Acceleration Options:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ES | MS | HS | Early Admission |
| ES | MS | HS | Subject Acceleration |
| ES | MS | HS | College Classes |

What services do your students need? To what extent are existing services connected to students' skills, abilities, talents, and interests? Does your school district prefer one or more services for some or all grade levels? What services should be added, modified, or reconsidered? Approach these questions or others by asking if the services are appropriate for all students, some students, or one student. Remember professional development should also be designed in response to educators' needs and the requirements of specific services. Knowing, understanding, and nurturing the gifts and talents of your students are steps to enhancing educational opportunities for the entire school district.

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# Recurring Themes in Career Counseling of Gifted and Talented Students

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## Introduction

To move forward in any field it is important to assess its current state, to note issues that remain the same, and to look for new trends. In this review of literature, some research-based and some not, recurring themes in career counseling for gifted and talented students are presented for re-examination.

Choosing a career is a lifelong process that demands accurate perceptions of ability, potential, and achievement (Kelly, 1996). Many career choices must be made during the lifespan, requiring much thought and reflection in the decision-making. A lifelong approach to career development is needed as career plans "are based on a long series of iterative decisions made throughout our lives" (Watts, 1996, p. 46). Career plans must be constantly revised to adapt to a continually changing world.

Different stages exist in career awareness and career maturity (Kelly & Colangelo, 1990; Super, 1980), but central to all of these stages are the common issues of decision-making, development of identity, and exploration. Modern career counseling should teach students self-awareness and decision-making to help them build satisfying lives (Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1999) and help in the development of necessary attitudes, skills, and academic pursuits for career exploration and planning.

Research and current literature indicate training and attention in schools to nonacademic issues such as career needs is minimal (Frederickson, 1986; Kelly, 1996; Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1999; Moon, Kelly, & Feldhusen, 1997; Perrone, 1997; Watts, 1996). By not addressing the career needs of gifted and talented students in our schools, our society loses potential contributions, and many of these individuals continue to be anxious, confused, or frustrated about their career decisions. Gifted and talented adolescents require more than attention to their academic pursuits. While in the planning phase of career decision-making, individuals in late adolescence are also establishing their identity. A solid sense of self is the underpinning for clarifying plans and aspirations (Chickering & Reisser, 1993) thus, self-concept may be positively related to career; certainty and career planning.

Gifted and talented students may face more challenges in career development than their age-peers due to possible additional psychosocial issues that may affect their sense of identity, including multipotentiality (Kelly & Hall, 1994; Perrone, 1997), early cognitive maturation (Frederickson, 1986; Kelly & Colangelo, 1990), unhealthy perfectionism and stress from the high expectations of significant others (Clark, 1992; Perrone, 1997; Schuler, 2000; Silverman, 1993). Gifted and talented females may also face further challenges in career development (Arnold, Noble, & Subotnik, 1996; Hollinger & Fleming, 1992; Kerr, 1994; Reis, 1998; Rimm, 1999). Some of the literature is research-based and some is not, however the issues above proliferate in discussions of gifted education and talent development.

## Multipotentiality

Multipotentiality is frequently cited as a problem for gifted and talented students in career planning (Clark, 1992; Kelly & Hall, 1994; Perrone, 1997; Silverman, 1993), although little empirical research demonstrates that this is, in fact, the case. In a 1997 study of 1,000 gifted adolescents, Achter, Benbow, and Lubinski found that only 5% truly displayed multipotentiality when above-level assessments of abilities and preferences were used. While intellectual ability was high across many academic subject areas, these multipotential students were actually diverse in their strengths and relative weaknesses, predispositions, and likes or loves for certain subject areas.

According to Berger (1989), the problem facing gifted students in their career planning may not be multipotentiality, but the lack of decision-making skills. Instead of focusing on their many existing abilities, these students should be encouraged to explore other aspects of their lives, such as their values, life-goals, and leisure activities (Stewart, 1999). By doing so, students learn to expand their experiences and develop new talents. Rysiew, Shore,

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and Carson (1994) assert that career decision-making is not a problem for students with multiple abilities, unless accompanied by multiple interests, motivations, and opportunities. Students are often expected to choose areas of specialization before they have even really experienced post-secondary institutions offerings as fields of study or majors.

## Gifted and Talented Females

While many career counseling issues are the same for both genders, the career decision making process for gifted girls may present more challenges than for gifted boys because of girls' earlier puberty and emotional maturation, along with greater self-concept discrepancies, higher and multiple societal ideals imposed on them and a minority status in some male-dominated occupational settings (Arnold, Noble & Subotnik, 1996; Kerr, 1994; Randall, 1997; Reis, 1998). Unfortunately for gifted girls, many of the same obstacles to career eminence have remained since the 1970s (Reis, 1998).

Some adolescent girls continue to opt out of the most challenging classes and lower their occupational aspirations as they progress through the educational system (Gottfredson, 1981; Reis, 1998), even though academic preparation and aspirations are crucial to college success (Gladieux & Swail, 2000).

Gifted girls tend to have more dominant career orientation, less traditional sex-role orientation, and a greater need to achieve in academic and occupational arenas than other females in general (Wolleat, 1979). While at the same time, the successful integration of career and family is of concern to most females with high career aspirations and is of more concern to females than to males (Reis, 1998). In a study of almost 1,000 college students, Novack and Novack (1996) found that 80% of females planned on attending graduate school and said they would be more committed to their careers than to marriage. However, a potential conflict is evident when one considers that 97% of these young women also said they planned to marry and 92% said they would be willing to make a career sacrifice for their husbands. Appropriate career counseling for females must realistically address both the difficulties and the advantages in successfully combining career and family.

Girls benefit from mentorships, with female mentors when possible, throughout their education (Beck, 1989; Gladieux & Swail, 2000; Reis, 1998). In Beck's study on the effects of a mentoring program for high school females (1989), she found that career development was the area the most affected by the mentorship, and that females felt more strongly than males that the mentorship helped them look at ways to combine career and family. Kerr (2000), however, believes that all of the work of high school mentoring can be undone in a year and a half at college. Gifted and talented college girls frequently succumb to the culture of romance at this level, realizing that status on campus is most often achieved by having a relationship with "a great guy," rather than by the pursuit of academic excellence and achievement (Erwin & Stewart, 1997; Kerr, 1994; Reis, 1995).

## Unhealthy Perfectionism and High Expectations of Others

Unreasonably high expectations of self and unhealthy or neurotic perfectionism (Schuler, 2000) may lead to problems in choosing a career path (Clark, 1992; Kelly & Hall, 1994; Novack & Novack, 1996; Silverman, 1993). An unhealthy perfectionist can be immobilized because of a desire to be perfect. The pressure to make the perfect career choice, to please significant others, including parents, teachers, and peers, can cause anxiety and fear of failure, which in turn may lead to indecision (Stewart, 1999), delaying decision making about careers, or frequent change of college major (Frederickson, 1986).

Another possibility is that to gain approval or hold love, gifted and talented adolescents may choose to behave according to the expectations of others rather than pursue personal fulfillment (Colozzi & Colozzi, 2000). This preoccupation with the opinions and expectations of others can be an advantage, as in a positive mentoring situation, or a distinct disadvantage. Some gifted and talented students, and in particular females, do not pursue their own dreams because they feel they must conform to the wishes of their parents (Reis, 1998).

## Early Cognitive Maturity and Vocational Identity

Super (1980) explains career or vocational maturity as the knowledge of one's career interests, abilities, and goals in relation to the work world. Gifted students have demonstrated earlier career maturity by being more certain of career choices than other

students (Kelly & Colangelo, 1990). This early, and sometimes premature certainty, may actually limit the further exploration of career possibilities, especially in college, where more choices are offered (Frederickson, 1986). Often, academically gifted students choose careers that require 10 or more years of post-secondary training (Stewart, 1999), and if this career decision is made early due to cognitive maturation without synchronous emotional maturation, the adolescent may not be able to consider the long range planning, persistence, and self-sacrifice needed to achieve the intended career goal. Kerr and Colangelo (1988) found that 50% of intellectually gifted college-bound students in their high school study selected majors from only three areas, engineering, health professions, and physical science, even though they were presented with almost 200 possibilities and had self-identified broad extracurricular interests. The long-term training for most professional careers also requires a certain amount of dependence, both financial and emotional, while the gifted population often needs to assert more independence at an earlier age (Silverman, 1993).

Kelly (1992) found that as a group, gifted students perceived fewer career barriers than other students, that gifted boys expressed more interest in a wider range of occupations than gifted girls, and that gifted girls seemed to attain more career information on their own than their male counterparts. Gagné and Poirier (1990) studied over 400 eighth and twelfth graders and found that over half of the students made their career choices based on limited personal knowledge of only 10 professions. Appropriate and ongoing career counseling could help many young students who know little about the changing nature of the work world or the myriad of occupations in it.

## Conclusion

There are many opposing beliefs about the nature of what counts as educational knowledge, for instance research-based studies versus reviews of literature, but what is certain is that there is much more that we need to know about career counseling for the diverse gifted and talented population. To provide appropriate career counseling for all gifted and talented students, additional areas seldom addressed in the existing literature need to be further explored. Areas of future consideration should include:

- the career needs of gifted and talented students who underachieve;
- the emphasis on college for gifted students;
- members of special populations of gifted and talented such as:
  - emotionally gifted,
  - creatively gifted,
  - disadvantaged,
  - gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender;
- the importance of chance in career development.

A lifespan approach to career counseling is crucial, acknowledging that occupational interests, competencies, creativity, and preferences may indeed change over time. Career counseling must also be tailored for individual needs of a diverse population. A collaborative career counseling effort among counselors, parents, and teachers can help each student develop a personal definition of identity, achievement, and career success after careful self-analysis of abilities, life goals, and occupational possibilities.

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# Dealing With the Needs of Underachieving Gifted Students in a Suburban School District: What Works!

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When I saw *A Beautiful Mind* and then read the book on which the movie was based (Nasar, 1998), I thought back to my 26 years of working with gifted students, about 1/4 of them with the kinds of off-putting characteristics exhibited by John Nash. Following are my reflections as a former teacher and supervisor in a program that is somewhat unique for its emphasis on "saving" underachievers.

When we think of schools' goals for students, especially gifted students, most mission statements include "helping students to reach their potential." Implied in those words is the message that both grades and conformity are important and that students must play the "school game" to succeed. As a result, many districts have high achievement, as measured by grades and standardized test scores, as a basic requirement for entrance into a gifted program.

Lower Merion School District (in Ardmore, Pennsylvania), on the other hand, has targeted gifted underachievers as one important audience for participation in its gifted program; this has been true since the inception of the program in 1976. As the program description says:

> *Lower Merion School District identifies gifted underachievers as a target group for participation in gifted support class. These students demonstrate a significant discrepancy between their cognitive potential and their performance in the classroom. (Lower Marion Gifted Support description, 2001)*

How do we determine who these underachievers are? After examining the literature on underachievement, we recognized that these students may demonstrate remarkable strengths or talents in some areas and disabling weaknesses in others (Baum, Dixon, & Owen, 1991). Further, research from The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (Díaz, Hébert, Maxfield, Ratley, & Reis, 1995) supports the idea that underachieving gifted students have difficulty actualizing their talents and gifts without differentiated instruction. Over the years, we have found underachievers to fall into a variety of categories:

- female, especially during adolescence
- member of a non-dominant cultural group
- student with other identified exceptionalities, such as a need for learning support, emotional support, and/or speech and language support
- student with a physical disability
- student with significant discrepancies between measured verbal and performance abilities, and/or with certain patterns of scatter on the WISC III intelligence test
- a lower socioeconomic background
- a non-traditional learner
- student who demonstrates at-risk behaviors

The goals for gifted underachieving students are primarily "to develop the following school survival skills and tactics" (Lower Marion Gifted Support Description, 2001). Our first task is to teach students self-regulation strategies, including taking time for reflection about their actions. This can be through discussion (either group or individual) and/or through informal journal keeping.

Further, we try to help them understand the personal issues of underachievement. We discuss what the label of "gifted" means to them and to others who interact with them. Each gifted support classroom has numerous copies of *The Gifted Kids' Survival Guide* and *Perfectionism: What's Bad About Being Too Good.* The gifted support program in Lower Merion is not graded, nor do students get credit for attending, even in middle and high school. Instead, teachers (who are designated as fulltime teachers of the gifted) try to establish a classroom atmosphere where students are willing to take risks, both academically and socially, without some external judgment like a "bad grade" or a "silly idea" to make him/her feel different.

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However, the gifted support program definitely has an intellectual and academic component. Students at the elementary grades are asked to choose a long range project in their area of interest, completing it as a practitioner in the field would, and then presenting it to an audience of peers, parents, and/or other students. Elementary students are first taught the basic skills that practitioners need: research techniques, planning for short and long range goals, deciding who the audience will be and then tailoring the product to the audience, and developing a rubric and timeline with the teacher—in advance—for the development of organizational and evaluation skills by the student him/herself. In middle schools, there are several themes offered each year; students continue to individualize their interests through their choice of topic and completion of a project. In addition, in sixth and seventh grades, advanced readers (determined by standardized tests) participate in literary circles once or twice a week. Often, these groups include underachievers. In high school, students work with gifted support teachers on both intellectual and social/emotional issues. Instead of a project, however, teachers and students select topics of interest, and these are discussed during the times students are scheduled to participate in the program (traditionally once or twice a week). Teachers may select newspaper or magazine articles, short stories or essays, or a video clip from a television news magazine. Again, students are not graded for their participation.

I believe the program for underachievers is successful for several reasons. First, there is at least one fulltime teacher in each of the district's 10 schools. There are more at the middle and high schools. This gives the teacher(s) of the gifted time to work with classroom teachers as both a resource for materials and a way for classroom teachers and specialists to understand the individual students more clearly. Second, parents, students, and staff are all very comfortable with the model of the program. No one has asked for grades or curriculum extensions in the past; this allows the students free rein to explore topics they might not ordinarily be able to pursue. Further, because of Pennsylvania law, there is at least one IEP (called GIEP) meeting each year for each identified gifted student. Gifted students are mixed in the pullout portion of the gifted program; we never have classes of "just" underachievers or high achievers. All students in the district are eligible to take all credit classes (provided they meet the criteria of the academic department). There is no "gifted track" where only identified gifted students may participate. Last, our multiple criteria allow many dually identified students to participate both in the resource room and in the gifted program.

Have all of our students "made it" in the "real world?" Except for a few, I would say almost all have. They may be in non-traditional professions, or have taken longer to finish college, but they are happy and productive individuals. After 26 years, I feel very comfortable with the Lower Merion program; it really does meet the needs of its students, including both high achievers and underachievers. John Nash was successful because those closest to him accepted him for what he was; his mother, sister, wife, peers, and colleagues understood that he might be "different" but that he had a great deal to offer the world. This is the most basic goal of Lower Merion's program: to help all gifted kids reach their potential, and to affirm their special gifts, despite individual behaviors and differences which might stand in their way.

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# Impact of the NRC/GT Research

DIRECTIONS: Please review and respond by circling the appropriate number (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Please return the survey to:

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented • University of Connecticut • 2131 Hillside Road Unit 3007 • Storrs, CT 06269-3007

**For each statement below, circle the number that best describes your response.**

| | Strongly Disagree | | | | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. NRC/GT's research products and materials have been appropriate and they meet my needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. NRC/GT's products and research findings have been useful in understanding the educational issues related to identifying and serving students with high abilities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. NRC/G's research products and findings have been useful in providing professional development to others in my district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. NRC/GT's research findings have been useful in contributing to my knowledge about gifted and talented students. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. NRC/GT's research products and findings have been useful in identifying students for gifted programming. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. NRC/GT's research products and findings have had an impact on gifted identification practices in my district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. NRC/GT's research products and findings have been useful in recognizing talent in different types of students. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. NRC/GT's research products and findings have had an impact on gifted programming practices in my district. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. NRC/GT's research products and findings have been useful in reviewing and modifying curricular options for high-end learning. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. NRC/GT's research products and findings have been useful in changing my approach to teaching. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

To what extent does our work contribute to your knowledge or understanding of educational issues related to identifying and serving students with high abilities?

# NRC/GT Announces Plans for a Large National Study

Ever wonder why some of the brightest students are underachievers? The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRC/GT) is exploring the reasons some bright students underachieve. The NRC/GT has developed several interventions to help bright, underachieving students to become more achievement oriented. During the 2002-2003 school year, the NRC/GT will be conducting a large, national research study to test the efficacy of these treatments.

The NRC/GT is seeking classroom teachers and teachers of the gifted in grades 5-8 who would be interested in working with one or two bright, underachieving students to implement one of the treatments in their classrooms. The study will begin in September 2002 and end in April 2003.

In addition to the large, national study, the NRC/GT is also seeking schools that are willing to pilot test instruments during the 2001-2002 school year. This would entail having students and/or teachers anonymously complete 1-2 survey forms. Interested parties should contact The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented at 860-486-4678 or **dorothy.mccoach@uconn.edu** for additional information.

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRC/GT) is looking for elementary and middle schools that are willing to participate in a series of research studies on academically able underachievers. If you are interested in receiving more information on this study, please return this form to the address at the bottom. Thank you.

---

District Name: _____

Name of Superintendent: _____

Name of School: _____

Grade Levels Within the School: _____

Name of Contact Person: _____

Mailing Address of Contact: _____

_____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Work Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

____ Please send our school/district information about participating in a research study on the underachievement of academically able students in conjunction with The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.

Please return this form to:

Del Siegle, Ph.D.
The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented
University of Connecticut
2131 Hillside Road Unit 3007
Storrs, CT 06269-3007
Phone: 860-486-4678
Fax: 860-486-2900
E-mail: dorothy.mccoach@uconn.edu or dsiegle@uconn.edu

# Awards and Honors

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented wishes to congratulate the following people on their recent awards and honors:

Dr. Robert J. Sternberg, Director of the Center for Psychology of Abilities, Competencies, and Expertise (PACE Center), was recently elected president of the American Psychological Association (APA). As the APA president, Dr. Sternberg plans to collaborate with governmental agencies to enhance funding of new research opportunities, including funding for psychological science studies.

Dr. Joseph S. Renzulli, Director of The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented at the University of Connecticut, was awarded the *Distinguished Service Award* from the National Association for Gifted Children.

Dr. Carolyn M. Callahan, Associate Director of The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented at the University of Virginia, was recently honored with the *Outstanding Higher Education Professional* award from the Neag School of Education Alumni Society at the University of Connecticut.

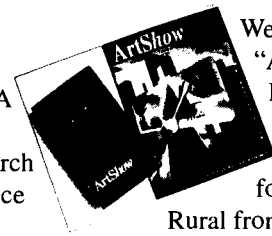
Dr. Del Siegle, researcher with The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented at the University of Connecticut, was re-elected to the Board of the National Association for Gifted Children. He also was awarded the *Early Leader Award* from the National Association for Gifted Children. The Pi Lambda Theta Beta Sigma Chapter named Dr. Del Siegle *Outstanding Educator.*

Dr. Elena Grigorenko, Deputy Director of the PACE Center, was the recipient of the APA Psychology and the Arts (Division 10) *Berlyne Early Career Award.* Last year, Dr. Grigorenko was honored with the *Koch Early Career Award* for APA Division 24 (Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology).

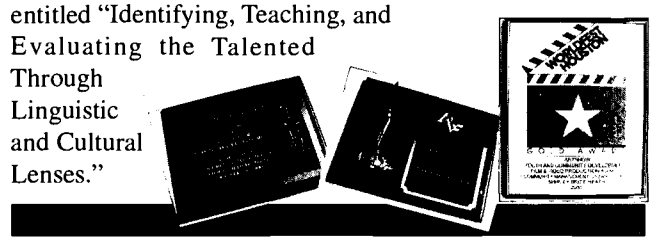
Dr. Mary Frasier, the former Associate Director of The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented at the University of Georgia, was selected as the recipient of the *2002 Adherhold Distinguished Professor Award* by the Colleges Awards Committee at the University of Georgia. The award was established to honor faculty members for excellence in research, teaching, and outreach/service.

Dr. Rena F. Subotnik is the Director of the Center for Psychology in the Schools and in Education at the American Psychological Association (APA) in Washington, DC. Prior to this position, she was involved in designing and administering the Center for Gifted Education Policy (CGEP) funded by the APA and housed in the Education Directorate (www.apa.org/ed/cgep.html). In addition, Dr. Subotnik is one of the research investigators for the Yale University research study entitled "Transitions in the Development of Giftedness: Musical Talent."

Dr. Sally M. Reis, Department Head and Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Connecticut, received The Ruth A. Martinson Memorial Past President's Award from the California Association for the Gifted for significant contribution that has had a substantial national impact on the education of the gifted students.




We are pleased to announce that the video, "ArtShow: Youth and Community Development," directed by Shirley Brice Heath, has received several honors. They include: Gold Award for Community Management Urban & Rural from Worldfest Houston, 2000; Bronze CINDY in Documentaries from the 42nd Annual International CINDY Competition, Fall 2000, International Association of Audio Visual Communicators; and the Bronze Plaque from the 48th Annual Columbus International Film & Video Festival, October 2000. The ArtShow video evolved from the NRC/GT research project entitled "Identifying, Teaching, and Evaluating the Talented Through Linguistic and Cultural Lenses."



# Diverse Populations in Gifted Education Programs Project

National Association for Gifted Children is very pleased to join The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented in a project that examines successful methods and strategies used to increase the participation of diverse populations of students in gifted and talented programming in school-based programs, after school, or in the summer. NAGC Past-President Sally M. Reis is coordinating the project.

We need your help to collect program information from across the country.

Please consider nominating exemplary programs that have successfully increased the participation of diverse students in gifted and talented programs.

Download and send the diversity program letter (www.nagc.org/new/diversityletter.htm) and the survey matrix (www.nagc.org/new/diversitymatrix.htm) directly to the nominated gifted education program.

**Send survey responses by May 15, 2002 to:**

National Association for Gifted Children
1707 L Street, NW - Suite 550
Washington, DC 20036

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The findings and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not reflect the position or policies of the National Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, or the U. S. Department of Education.

Please send change of address notification to the NRC/GT Mailing List at the address below or via e-mail to epsadm06@uconnvm.uconn.edu. Phone (860-486-4676) FAX (860-486-2900) Internet (www.gifted.uconn.edu).



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