Promising Practices for Improving Identification of English Learners for Gifted and Talented Programs

E. Jean Gubbins, Ph.D.
University of Connecticut

Del Siegle, Ph.D.
University of Connecticut

Pamela M. Peters
University of Connecticut

Ashley Y. Carpenter
College of William & Mary

Rashea Hamilton, Ph.D.
Washington Student Achievement Council

D. Betsy McCoach, Ph.D.
University of Connecticut

Jeb Puryear, Ph.D.
University of Montana

This research from the National Center for Research on Gifted Education (NCRGE; http://ncrge.uconn.edu; http://ncrge.uconn.edu) was funded by the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education (PR/Award # R305C140018).

Published online first on September 21, 2020

Gubbins, E. J., Siegle, D., Peters, P. M., Carpenter, A. Y., Hamilton, R., McCoach, D. B., Puryear, J. S., Langley, S. D., & Long, D. (2020). Promising practices for improving identification of English learners for gifted and talented programs. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted, 43*(4), 336-369. https://doi.org/10.1177/0162353220955241

Abstract

The underrepresentation of English learners (ELs) in gifted and talented programs is a societal and research problem that merits investigation. Three state departments of education and their state directors of gifted programs supported our access to 16 schools across nine districts. In these three states with gifted identification and programming mandates, ELs were proportionally represented in gifted and talented programs in the 16 schools we visited. Interview data from 225 participants revealed four themes: adopting universal screening procedures, creating alternative pathways to identification, establishing a web of communication, and using professional learning as a lever for change.

Promising Practices for Improving Identification of English Learners for Gifted and Talented Programs

English learners (ELs) are the fastest growing population of students in the United States. However, despite the growing number of ELs, their representation in gifted programming continues to lag behind not only populations of advantaged communities, but also other underserved populations of students.

The identification of children for gifted services in public schools is one of the most controversial and contested aspects of gifted and talented education because the process results in some students being labeled gifted while others are not—particularly controversial when the students are from culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse (CLED) populations (de Wet & Gubbins, 2011; Borland, 2003; Castellano & Díaz, 2002; Ford, 2014; Ford & Grantham, 2003; Ford & Whiting, 2008; Kitano, 2003; Worrell, 2014). Once nominated for gifted and talented programs, students are often screened using assessments that may include standardized tests of IQ, ability, or aptitude, and achievement. For EL students, these assessments represent one of the greatest barriers to gifted identification. Researchers have long contended that EL students will not perform as well on assessments with verbal components in English due to linguistic and cultural factors (Bernal, 2002; de Bernard & Hofstra, 1985; Esquierdo & Arreguin-Anderson, 2012; Ford, Grantham, & Whiting, 2008; Gonzalez, 1974; Harris, Rapp, Martinez, & Plucker, 2007; Melesky, 1985).

Plucker and Callahan (2014) asserted that for gifted education to advance and thrive, the field "needs to take several bold steps to shrink excellence gaps—and to do so by raising the achievement levels of underachieving groups, not by allowing already high-performing groups to slip" (p. 400). Part of that advancement requires more research in the field of EL gifted education since the current body of knowledge is quite limited (Granada, 2003). Some have suggested that the achievement gap at the top begins with an identification gap in selecting students for gifted and talented programs (Mun et al., 2016; Yaluma & Tyner, 2018).

Bernal (2002) was adamant about the need to gather data about successful identification approaches and student success. He argued that "*no meaningful changes in the identification process will take place in very traditional middle-class GT programs unless good data can be used to justify the outcomes of an alternative selection system*" (p. 85, italics in original). The underrepresentation of ELs in gifted and talented programs represents both a societal and research problem that merits a thorough investigation. The first step in this research is to investigate what practices are being successfully implemented to identify gifted and talented EL students. To address this step, we generated the following research questions to answer while visiting schools in three states that were successfully identifying EL students for their gifted programs:

1. What procedures, practices, and instruments are used to assess and identify ELs for gifted and talented programs?
2. What are the roles of district and school personnel involved in the assessment and identification of ELs for gifted and talented programs?
3. What challenges do districts and schools encounter in the assessment and identification of ELs for gifted and talented programs?

Background of the Study

The number of public-school students classified as ELs increased from 4.3 million in 2004-2005 to 4.6 million in 2014-2015, representing an increase from 9.1% to 9.4% of the public-school student population (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). The significance of the size of the EL population was even more evident in the percentage of kindergarten students, which was 16.7% in 2014-2015. According to the United States Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition (2015), as of the school year 2013-2014, Spanish was the first language of 89% of ELs, while approximately 50 languages were on the top five lists of one or more states.

The definition of EL varies by state, as some create their own definition and others either use the federal definition or have not yet chosen one to use (Education Commission of the States, 2014). The federal definition of an EL student refers to students ages 3 through 21 in elementary or secondary schools who were not born in the United States or whose native language is other than

English. ELs may have difficulty meeting academic standards, succeeding in classes instructed in English, or participating fully in society (United States Department of Education, ESEA Section 8101(20), 2016). Although issues of academic underperformance and high dropout rates among ELs have received greater attention in recent years (National Education Association, 2008), a lesser known area of concern is the systemic underrepresentation of ELs in gifted and talented programs.

Underrepresentation of ELs in Gifted and Talented Programs

The United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (2014) reported that in the 2011-2012 school year just 2% of ELs were enrolled in gifted and talented programs compared to 7% of non-ELs. The underrepresentation of ELs in gifted and talented programs is part of a larger issue of imbalanced representation across student groups by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status that has persisted throughout the history of gifted and talented education (Mun et., 2016). The underrepresentation of ELs in gifted and talented programs has been attributed to factors related to the identification instruments and practices used as well as dominant conceptions of giftedness (Kogan, 2001). Variations in opportunity to learn due to systemic inequality in education must be taken into consideration when evaluating scores on ability and achievement tests that assume some similar background experiences for a given group of students (Worrell, 2014). For ELs, lower scores on ability and

achievement tests are confounded by the specific language demands of the test (Peters & Engerrand, 2016).

The field of gifted education has been characterized as elitist in that it mainly serves students who are from high SES families (Siegle, 2018), are White, or are from otherwise privileged backgrounds (Borland, 2003; Sapon-Shevin, 2003). Students with advantages are perceived as gaining even more advantages by enjoying the benefits of gifted pedagogy, smaller classrooms, and more skilled teachers, which runs counter to the ideals of egalitarianism (Sapon-Shevin, 2003; Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius, & Worrell, 2011).

Identification Practices in Gifted and Talented Programs

It is important to understand that identifying gifted and talented students is a multi-stage process reflecting state laws, regulations, and guidelines. Given that procedures associated with this process vary, it is helpful to define terms, such as screening, nomination, identification, and placement, and to separate the components for explanatory purposes.

Screening. Screening refers to a purposeful approach to determining students' gifts and talents. The spring of grade 2 or grade 3 is often the designated time for group administration of a reasoning and problem-solving test (e.g., Cognitive Abilities Test [Cog*AT*]) or a nonverbal ability test (e.g., Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test [NNAT]). Cog*AT* measures verbal, nonverbal, and quantitative abilities; NNAT measures nonverbal ability. Achievement tests (e.g.,

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills [ITBS]) are sometimes used as part of the screening process. The term “universal screening” is used when data are collected on all students at one or more grade levels.

Nomination. Nomination involves naming students to be considered for gifted services. This involves collecting informal or formal data about students who perform above grade level or demonstrate potential strengths and abilities. Potential respondents include administrators; district gifted coordinators; gifted specialists; classroom teachers; parents/guardians/caretakers; students; or community members. One example of an informal process involves requesting student names based on state or local definitions of giftedness. Formal processes may include disseminating a list of behavioral characteristics to guide the respondents’ ratings or requesting completion of standardized nomination/rating scales consisting of close-ended items. Responses to open-ended items may require the inclusion of real-life examples of behavioral characteristics associated with gifted and talented students.

Identification. Identification may involve one or more of the following approaches:

a. The first approach is reviewing existing student data from formal and informal sources and determining eligibility and need for programming.

b. If a “screener” was used initially, which includes samples of item types, the second approach includes administering the full test battery. Depending on the test, district gifted coordinators, gifted specialists, classroom teachers, school psychologists, or counselors would conduct the assessment.
c. The third approach includes requesting parent permission for the administration of an individual IQ test by a school psychologist. Resulting data are then presented to the decision-making team and parents/guardians/caretakers.

Placement. Placement is the final component of the process when decisions are made about the students’ status as meeting the qualifications and demonstrating a need for programs and services, not meeting the qualifications, or requiring further testing or consideration.

Methods

Selection of Schools

We selected three states with a mandate to identify and serve gifted students that were willing to share student data with us. They provided us with all students’ reading and mathematics academic achievement outcomes across grades 3-5; student demographics, including race/ethnicity, free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL) status, gifted status; the school students attended, and their grade level.

From this data set, we selected schools and districts where ELs were proportionally represented in their gifted and talented programs.

To select schools, we conducted analyses using a school level data file that contained counts of the students classified as EL (EVER_ELL), students identified as gifted by grade 5 (GIFT5), and students classified as both (GIFT5*EVER_ELL) variables for the grade 5 data within the school. Our school level data file contained the actual proportion of GIFT5*ELs in the school.

To estimate the expected proportion of gifted ELs in the school, we computed the product of the GIFT5 and the EVER_ELL variables. We then created a variable that we called the proportionality ratio (or RATIO). The proportionality ratio represents the actual proportion of gifted ELs being identified in the school divided by the expected proportion of gifted ELs, given the proportion of gifted and talented students and the proportion of ELs in the school. A value of 1 indicates the ELs are proportionately represented in the gifted and talented programs—there are as many gifted ELs as would be expected based on the number of gifted and talented students and the number of ELs in the school. A value less than 1 indicates ELs are underrepresented and a value greater than 1 indicates ELs are better represented than would be expected. We used .90 as our cut-off for proportional representation. In other words, the actual proportion of GT-ELs had to be at least 90% of the expected proportion for us to consider the school as “proportionally identifying GT-ELs.

Because the denominator of the equation becomes very small when there are either relatively few ELs in a school or relatively few gifted and talented students in a school, it would be a mistake to assume that higher proportionality ratios are always better. Ratios of approximately 1 or more are good, and ratios closer to zero are certainly worse than larger ratios. However, some schools with very few gifted or very few ELs end up with computed ratios well above 1. Therefore, rather than simply taking the schools with the highest ratios as our schools of interest, we generated inclusion criteria:

1. At least 3 GT/ELs in the cohort
2. At least 10 students in the cohort
3. The proportionality ratio for Gifted EL was >=.90
4. Proportion of EVER_ELL students was at least .10.

Using these criteria, we selected three districts in each of the three states. Across the three districts we visited 16 schools that were proportionately identifying EL students for their gifted program.

Data Collection

We conducted one-day visits to 16 schools (14 elementary and 2 middle schools). A two-member research team spent one day at each school to collect interview and focus group data, along with specific school documents. We interviewed key persons (N=225) most knowledgeable about identification practices, including administrators (n=30), district gifted coordinators (n=15),

gifted specialists (*n*=25), classroom teachers (*n*=75), parents/legal guardians/caretakers (*n*=71), and school psychologists or counselors (*n*=9). Some of the same participants were also part of identification committee interviews. We analyzed comments from these 225 key persons, which yielded 84 transcripts, to address the research questions.

Data Analysis

The analysis of 84 transcripts from 225 interviewees proceeded by using Strauss and Corbin's (1998) and Corbin and Strauss's (2008) stages of open, axial, and selective coding. The goal was to find one or more core categories or themes that explained what "this research would be all about" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 146).

We created an EL codebook based on our theory of change. The theory of change included four phases related to the identification of ELs for gifted and talented programs: pre-identification, preparation, identification, and acceptance of placement. We conducted training on using the EL codebook and working with Dedoose, a qualitative data analysis program, with six qualitative research team members; four of these team members had conducted site group and individual interviews. Several sections of transcripts were used to experiment with assigning codes on paper, comparing results of codes, and discussing terminology and code definitions (Saldaña, 2013). Then we practiced coding sample sections of transcripts using Dedoose. Throughout the process of coding transcripts, we met

weekly to share and discuss potential patterns and themes. We selected a subset of transcripts to check intercoder agreement, which "requires that two or more coders are able to reconcile through discussion whatever coding discrepancies they may have for the same unit of text" (Campbell, Quincy, Osserman, & Pedersen, 2013, p. 297). As we discussed coding results and coding discrepancies, we re-visited the codebook, clarified interpretations of definitions, and added more examples of text from transcripts that reflected definitions. The coding of the 84 transcripts yielded: 2,207 excerpts; 6,278 total code applications; 208 total axial codes; four selective codes or themes.

Interview and focus group protocols included the following question: Will you please describe how your district/school carries out the identification of gifted students? Interview and focus group participants shared specific identification procedures, practices, and instruments. Research team members reviewed participants' descriptions of the identification process, listed the tools, and classified them based on three categories: Cognitive Ability/Intelligence Tests, Achievement Tests, and Rating Scales. We calculated the frequencies of the identification tools by the number of schools by state and across schools.

Results

Procedures, Practices, and Instruments

Procedures and practices for the identification of ELs for gifted programs varied across states but included similar basic components. In these three states,

nine districts and 14 of the 16 schools used universal screening, nonverbal assessments, cut scores, and native language assessments, while seven districts and eight schools used talent pools for promising students.

Nine districts within the three states in our study used cognitive ability and achievement tests as part of the identification process. Appendix A lists specific cognitive ability/intelligence tests and achievement tests used by schools. Districts also locally developed teacher, parent, and student rating scales, as well as gifted behaviors checklists.

District-level identification procedures included a variety of instruments and tools to gather more student information. Advocacy, proactive searches for students of promise, and flexibility in applying criteria were important components of the process to ensure districts did not overlook students. The classification as gifted and talented was a decision based on evidence from multiple sources.

The gifted specialist in State 1, District 2 described how assessments were used to increase access to the gifted and talented program:

> So, we give an aptitude test, an achievement test, and there is a group test, and once those come back, we look at that and if they've got a high aptitude score but not so high on the achievement then we can give them additional tests like Woodcock Johnson. If it's the other way around where achievement is high and aptitude is not, then we'll give them either the

> [Reynolds Intellectual Screening Test] RIST or the Raven's. (Gifted specialist interview, 1-2-A, 4/19/2016)

In addition to standardized assessments, eight of the nine districts included performance assessments, such as portfolios, work samples, and grades as a component for identification. For example, State 1, District 3 initiated a new practice to collect information for student portfolios, which it used to provide a more complete picture of a student's abilities. State 3, District 3 also used portfolios. The district gifted coordinator described the portfolio procedures:

> And the portfolio would be at least three products . . . people on a team who would independently look at those products. Then they get together. They come to consensus on the reading of those products that would demonstrate creativity, motivation, leadership and or advanced academics. And that can be used in place of the test scores. (District gifted coordinator interview, 3-3-A, 6/1/2016)

Despite the consistent use of standardized cognitive and achievement assessments along with performance assessments, variability in identification procedures occurred across states and districts most often when practices specific to the identification of ELs were involved.

In State 1, District 3, a member of the identification team commented on the use of multiple measures:

> We look at the teacher's recommendation as well; we look at several different test batteries with the classwork and observation, so we try and compile a lot of different things to get the whole picture of the child, so it's not just test scores or it's not just this or that, to try and really widen that scope of who are identified. (Identification committee focus group, 1-3-B, 9/15/2016)

Gifted specialists also expressed how they approached their search for students with gifts and talents who may not have full command of English. One specialist in State 2, District 2 described the "hunt" for students with high potential.

> Maybe having someone that's in a position that my job is to be on the hunt–kind of at all times, so knowing the scores of my students at my school and being the one that says, "Wait a minute, this person got ninety-nine percent on the nonverbal; . . . might have gotten thirty percent on the verbal scores on the Cog*AT* or the quantitative scores, but look at the nonverbal." So, we've got a language barrier here but they're obviously able to think at a higher level, so let's start getting the data. (Gifted specialist focus group, 2-2-A, 5/11/16)

Roles of District and School Personnel

District gifted coordinators and/or gifted specialists were centrally involved in the assessment and identification process, both within and outside of

the classroom. They generally had or were working on earning gifted education endorsements or degrees in gifted and talented education. Gifted specialists were frequently responsible for providing informal training to classroom teachers, which was important as classroom teachers often made the initial referral/nomination for assessment. After this initial referral step, these classroom teachers were often not part of the process. Some schools involved their EL teacher in the referral and/or assessment process as well.

Schools with identification committees generally attempted to include gifted education staff, school psychologists or counselors, administrators, and classroom teachers on the committee. There was also mention of using an interpreter/translator during assessment, as needed, in at least one school.

To ensure accountability, district personnel were involved in the process as well. In cases where schools did not have an identification committee, the gifted specialist or district gifted coordinator was generally the person who ultimately made the final identification determination. In general, the same personnel were responsible for assessing and identifying both EL and non-ELs. Some schools made an effort to ensure their identification committees were as diverse as possible. Personnel involved in identifying ELs for gifted programs had knowledge of the characteristics of gifted and talented students; understood the importance of assembling a group of educators from various roles, backgrounds,

and responsibilities; and sought alternative measures when possible to make informed decisions.

Schools made limited effort to provide all educators with professional development on assessing, identifying, and serving ELs specifically. Personnel at five schools discussed professional development opportunities about gifted ELs, some of which took place outside of the academic school year. Personnel at another five schools mentioned this as a goal for the future. Personnel from three schools mentioned that courses for gifted education endorsements were their only training. Professional development in these areas was more common for gifted specialists, school psychologists or counselors, and EL educators. Often these professional development opportunities were targeted towards one specific group of personnel at a time. For example, one school offered identification training for gifted specialists focused on recognizing biases related to gifted identification. Several schools offered professional development opportunities that included people from different specialty areas to collaborate. Guidance counselors and bilingual psychologists participated in meetings with the district gifted coordinator or gifted specialists.

Spreading this professional development to the entire school community was not always a priority. When professional development occurred, it was most often on an informal, just-in-time basis. However, outcomes observed in one school suggested that formal, collaborative professional development between

English Language Acquisition and gifted specialists may result in substantial increases in EL identification for gifted education programs. As one district gifted coordinator stated, “We walked into that room and four children in our entire district were identified as gifted ELs. . . . We left that room with forty-five students ready to identify” (District gifted coordinator interview, 2-2-A, 5/11/2016).

Professional development related to identifying ELs for gifted and talented programs was not a requirement for all administrators and teachers. Interview participants shared various strategies to inform educators and the community at large about identification procedures, practices, and instruments. They also shared assessment and identification challenges they still face.

Challenges in Assessing and Identifying ELs for Gifted and Talented Programs

As stated previously, the identification process can be divided into four components: screening, nomination, identification, and placement. Each component presents different challenges related to identifying gifted ELs. Interview participants described the challenges in this process, shared potentially beneficial strategies, and noted suggestions for additional interventions and strategies.

The goal of this first component of the system was to determine which students should be evaluated for gifted services. The major challenge in this

component was a general hesitation by teachers; parents/guardians/caretakers; and other stakeholders in referring ELs for evaluation. This hesitation can delay or outright prevent the identification of ELs as gifted and talented and may be found at all grade levels and across students with any native language other than English. The problem diminished as students gained English language mastery. This can be related to the focus on English language acquisition and literacy in elementary education. In the words of a gifted program coordinator: “Sometimes teachers are quick to dismiss those kids because of the language barrier, like they don’t recognize it because they’re so focused on them learning their lack of knowing the language that maybe they don’t recognize the other areas” (District gifted coordinator, 1-1-A, 3/8/2016).

Of the schools we visited, 14 of the 16 used some form of universal screening, most often an ability test such as the Cog*AT* or the NNAT. Two schools used achievement test data as their universal screening tool. Universal screening appeared to be a successful strategy at our subject schools, but many of them acknowledged that it could not entirely mitigate screening challenges. Students who are not identified at the time of the screening, or who move into the district at other grade levels, must have a way to access the evaluation process, which most often involves administrator, teacher, or parent/guardians/caretaker referrals.

Teachers were responsible for the second phase of the process, nomination, because they worked closely with students in the classroom, and they had the advantage of observing students' critical thinking, reasoning abilities, content knowledge, subject interest, and social-emotional regulation. As noted above, schools used locally-developed teacher, parent, and student rating scales more often than published instruments, which raises questions about the reliability, validity, and research-based evidence about characteristics of gifted students. There are several issues related to reliability and validity. It is important to offer professional development related to administering rating scales, which may yield varied results if administered at different times of the year due to students' learning growth and maturity. It must be acknowledged that educational terminology related to gifted and talented education may be unfamiliar to persons completing rating scales; therefore, misinterpretation of students' characteristics may occur. Additionally, selected rating scales may reflect possible biases or misconceptions of persons involved in their development.

The third component of the identification process was the review of the data and determination of identification status. Stakeholders interviewed for this study discussed two challenges. The first, and more commonly discussed, of the two was policies determining who can and cannot be identified and admitted into gifted and talented programs. Some states or districts set cut scores on specific measures; students scoring below the cut scores cannot be identified for gifted and

talented programs. Individual schools within those districts or states have struggled to meet the needs of ELs because of the difficulties with test-taking and assessment, and personnel have developed a number of strategies to work within and around the system.

The second concern interview participants had during this component of the identification process was the lack of communication and coordination between the EL and gifted education departments when they shared, or potentially shared, the same students. Interview participants at 13 of the 16 schools mentioned this issue. One school formed an EL advisory committee to work with the gifted specialists, while others conducted or stated they would like to conduct professional development sessions for EL and gifted specialists together on topics relevant to both departments, such as how ELs who are gifted might be supported in having their abilities be recognized in the classroom.

The final component of the identification process was placement. Both school personnel and parents/guardians/caretakers expressed concerns about the mismatch between testing in a native language and services provided in English. In the words of one parent, “Services are only offered in English and so when kids are advanced or they have different needs when they’re in Kindergarten and First Grade there is nobody who can provide those services for them in the language that they’re learning in” (Parent focus group, 2-1-B, 5/6/2016). One administrator

talked about the balance between flexibility in testing and rigor in services, stating:

> Are we flexible? Maybe a child is not fully ready . . . but show signs of . . . high level of thinking. . . . That really sticks out to me with the EL students, because again, they have to navigate a lot, two languages, two cultures. . . . (Administrator interview, 1-3-B, 9/15/2016)

Ultimately, in addition to the identification challenges, it is also difficult to accurately assess the number of ELs identified for gifted and talented programs. When we struggle to define EL and gifted parameters, we lose track of our purpose and have difficulty evaluating the representation of EL students in gifted and talented programs. ELs are reclassified depending on their level of language acquisition and the status of their enrollment in classes for ELs.

Emergent Themes Related to Identification of Gifted ELs

We identified four themes that emerged from the inductive qualitative analyses: (a) Adopting Universal Screening Procedures; (b) Creating Alternative Pathways to Identification; (c) Establishing a Web of Communication; and (d) Viewing Professional Development as a Lever for Change. The four themes are presented here for review and reflection by state and local decision makers responsible for the screening, nomination, identification, and placement of ELs in gifted and talented programs.

Theme 1: Adopting universal screening procedures. The nine districts employed universal screening procedures in one or more grade levels to assess students' academic and reasoning skills, which provided opportunities to display their abilities and achievement. Rather than identifying students' deficits to prevent them from receiving services, school personnel sought evidence of students' strengths from a variety of sources. Data sources included nominations, rating scales, and portfolios to supplement universal screening results. In addition, schools administered different nonverbal ability assessments (e.g., Cognitive Ability Test (Cog*AT*, nonverbal subtest), Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test [NNAT], Raven's Progressive Matrices, Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence [CTONI], Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test [UNIT]). These assessments provided perspectives on students' reasoning abilities.

School personnel recognized that giftedness manifests in different ways and at different times, which is why the identification process extended across grades. Time was on the side of students who were in the process of learning English. Indicators of students' abilities included the speed of English language acquisition and the rate of mastering reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in English. As students' mastery of English progressed, school personnel were better able to recognize students' giftedness. Therefore, universal screening was not a one-time event on an inflexible timetable. It was more important to

account for language differences, seek alternative pathways to identification, and ensure native language assessments were appropriate and culturally sensitive.

Theme 2: Creating alternative pathways to identification. Nine of the 16 schools created alternative pathways to identification. These schools used a variety of different assessment instruments. When available, schools used native language ability and achievement assessments as indicators of potential giftedness. Ability assessments implemented in Spanish included Bateria III Woodcock Muñoz and Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children [WISC] Spanish). Achievement tests in Spanish included Aprenda and Logramos.

Schools maintained a list of multilingual school psychologists qualified to administer assessments in Spanish. Unfortunately, standardized, norm-referenced tests are typically limited to Spanish.

As previously stated, school personnel avoided a deficit model that blocks students from services and implemented practices that sought to identify students' strengths. This process took one of two forms: preparation programs or talent pool lists of students. Prior to formal identification procedures, personnel at five schools incorporated preparation programs in the early grades or beyond the school day. Students were involved in learning opportunities to enhance knowledge and academic skills necessary for students to be recognized and screened at a future time. These opportunities also enabled program personnel to serve as talent scouts who recognized students' strengths in learning environments

that differed from the students' general education classroom experiences. At another subset of five schools, students who did not meet the identification criteria were considered part of the talent pool, which meant they received gifted services alongside formally identified students. These experiences not only met the students' learning needs, but also helped develop the knowledge and academic skills necessary to later be identified for official program services.

Throughout implementing universal screening procedures and creating alternative pathways to identification, it was important to establish effective and intentional communication techniques or a "web of communication."

Theme 3: Establishing a web of communication. Schools established a web of communication in which all personnel were aware of the identification system in its entirety and were empowered to interact with one another in all components (i.e., screening, nomination, identification, and placement) to identify ELs' talents. Multilingual instructors were an essential component of these webs. In some cases, they were the first persons at the school to recognize ELs' advanced skills. Multilingual staff members' interactions with the gifted specialists and their participation with gifted identification committees increased the number of ELs considered for the gifted and talented program.

Identification committee included representatives with key responsibilities in various roles (e.g., administrators, classroom teachers, gifted specialists, district gifted coordinators, EL teachers, multilingual personnel, school psychologists or

counselors, special education personnel) and departments. Educators within and across specializations/departments (e.g., general education, English as a second language [ESL], special education) offered their perspectives on the gifts and talents of ELs in various educational environments. Such collaboration and communication regarding identification highlighted the need to foster and search for potential talents among small or large groups of ELs. It was evident that when a higher proportion of students in a school were ELs, their needs became a primary focus of school personnel and the web of communication tended to be better developed. Personnel at four schools and observed at two others noted this link. Communication was necessary within and outside of school.

Developing and implementing intentional outreach approaches to the school community, particularly parents/guardians/caretakers, was a critical strategy. Clearly written program information available via district or school websites, video segments posted to school websites and shareable via social media, information and community-building nights held at the school or in conjunction with community groups, and regularly distributed newsletters serve as examples to maintain interconnected communication strategies between and among district personnel, school personnel, parents, and community members.

Among the schools, parent/guardian/caretaker involvement was important but not consistent within or across schools. Some parents/guardians/caretakers were reticent to contact the school about their children’s giftedness. If one child in

a family had previously been identified as gifted, parents/guardians/caretakers were more likely to approach the schools about a second child. Without these webs of communication among administrators, district gifted coordinators, classroom teachers, gifted specialists, multilingual teachers, and parents/guardians/caretakers, the observations of individuals with first-hand knowledge of ELs' gifts and talents would have been lost.

Data gathering procedures are often complex using assessment, performance, and observational information. However, all procedures require background knowledge and expertise about characteristics of students with gifts and talents. To gain a knowledge base, professional development is necessary to illuminate the characteristics of ELs with gifts and talents and to develop effective identification practices (Lynch, 2018).

Theme 4: Viewing professional development as a lever for change.

Personnel in this research study used, or wanted to use, professional development as a lever for change. Educators and parents/guardians/caretakers who understood that giftedness can be revealed in different ways were more likely to identify ELs as gifted. The challenge these schools faced was how to provide the necessary professional development to share this understanding with all stakeholders. To achieve a goal of equitable representation of ELs in gifted and talented programs, school personnel offered professional development opportunities about effective identification practices and procedures. Five schools provided information about

identifying ELs to the gifted specialists. In two cases, they were able to extend this to classroom teachers and school psychologists or counselors.

Parents/guardians/caretakers were the most overlooked group. Personnel at two schools discussed ongoing efforts to reach out to parents/guardians/caretakers, and personnel at a third school mentioned beginning this process. Schools that were able to provide professional development created a school climate where personnel recognized the goal of gifted identification was to identify students' strengths, rather than using weaknesses to serve as roadblocks to identification. In this climate, personnel viewed having more than one language as an asset, rather than a deficit.

Conclusions

The results of this exploratory study on the identification of ELs for gifted and talented programs led to four phases for improving identification of ELs for gifted and talented programs (see Figure 1) that offer insights into practices that may lead to equitable representation of ELs in gifted programs.

----------*Insert Figure 1 about here*----------

Professional development improves school personnel's awareness of EL issues related to identification. This increased awareness results in changes in

identification practices, the evolution of a web of communication among all stakeholders, and modifications in program services.

Changes in identification practices include providing pre-identification opportunities to encourage emergence of talents, using universal screening to avoid overlooking talented students, setting alternative pathways to identification to increase opportunities for talent to be recognized, frequently screening students to identify students whose talents manifest later, and using culturally appropriate assessments, such as testing in the student's native language. Each of these practices has the potential to increase the number of ELs identified for gifted services.

The web of communication (see Figure 2) promotes awareness of EL talent among all stakeholders (e.g., administrators, district gifted coordinators; gifted specialists; parents/guardians/caretakers; EL specialists, classroom teachers, school psychologists, or counselors). This develops a practice of stakeholders serving as talent scouts.

----------*Insert Figure 2 about here*----------

Improved awareness of EL identification issues results in modifications to program services that involve inclusion of culturally responsive curriculum and adding support services to ensure ELs are successful in the gifted and talented

program. These modifications increase trustworthiness in communication among stakeholders and may improve acceptance rates and placement of ELs in the gifted and talented program.

Discussion

The evidence documented here reflects new and growing awareness, knowledge, and skills for addressing historical and persistent patterns of underrepresentation of ELs in gifted and talented programs. It illustrates that there are no uniform solutions, but rather developing teacher and parent capacities for supporting equitable representation in gifted education. This evolution in practice originated in the daily work of teachers, school personnel, and administrators committed to recognizing and serving the needs of students, across differences that include language-acquisition, immigration, and socioeconomic status. This reflects a paradigm shift where all stakeholders move from being deficit detectors, who search for reasons why students should not quality for gifted services, to talent scouts, who recognize the diverse ways students manifest their talents.

In a nation where one in five residents speaks a language other than English in the home (Batalova & Zong, 2016), it has become incumbent on all educators to reflect on how to support multilingualism and multiculturalism, which is the explicit goal of culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012). The integration of knowledge from the fields of multicultural education, which encompasses culturally sustaining pedagogy, and gifted education offers new

possibilities for equitable practices in developing the gifts and talents of all students.

Many of the practices in this study are examples of ways in which educators have sought to include alternative tests, flexible cutoff scores, and advanced learning opportunities using their current district policies. These are all important remedies in the systems that have been in place, and all educators should have access to information about how to utilize them to benefit the students they serve.

The historic patterns of underrepresentation in gifted and talented programs illustrated in this study can be disrupted through recognizing the barriers of current and historic practices to equitably serving all of our students and pursuing new culturally sustaining approaches. As demonstrated by group and individual interview participants, this begins with evaluating and changing current practices that function as barriers to recognizing and serving the advanced learning needs of students in underrepresented groups. This is supported by the effective collection and use of data to ensure that goals for equitable representation are included at every level of decision-making processes.

To make more than incremental progress toward these goals for ELs, educators must examine underlying philosophical beliefs about predominantly monolingual approaches to education and the existence of gifts and talents across all populations in creating professional development and hiring practices to build

cultural competence. Professional development as a lever for change should extend to an analysis of the placement data: Which students were identified? Which students were referred for additional assessments or collection of performance data? Which students were placed on a talent pool list? As these questions are addressed, it is important to develop a systematic approach to analyzing district and school demographics (e.g., race/ethnicity, FRPL, ELs). Student status as identified/not identified for gifted and talented programs, along with goals for ensuring equitable opportunities to participate in such programs, should be discussion review points.

Recognizing that students' cultural and linguistic identities are inseparable from their academic identities, it is essential to provide a welcoming and inclusive school climate for all students and their families. Parent/guardian/caretaker, and community involvement provides connection between students' home and school experiences, fostered by the types of district and school communication practices recommended in this study. The future of culturally and linguistically-sustaining gifted education in the U.S. is one that will reflect the diversity of our student population across all differences, measured at the local level in every school building.

Limitations

The results of study of identification practices of ELs for gifted and talented programs must be viewed in terms of limitations related to site selection

and the implementation of semi-structured focus group questions with participants representing various educational roles and responsibilities. Specific criteria guided site selection within three states with gifted and talented identification and programming mandates. Three districts in each of the three states served as the data collection sites at 16 schools. The number of schools is a small sample; therefore, limited conclusions about identification procedures and practices can be drawn.

A second limitation of the data is that a two-member research team spent one day at each school collecting interview and focus group data. Although a total of 225 people from multiple roles with varying levels of direct involvement with identification procedures shared information, the time commitment with schools and the use of focus groups prevented in-depth analyses. Within focus groups, researchers posed questions and one or more persons may have been willing to share responses. All focus group members may not have been polled individually to elicit responses. In addition, one or more persons may have consistently responded to questions. If researchers did not elicit responses from multiple participants, the resulting data may not have been as informative as possible.

A third limitation is the design and implementation of semi-structured interview and focus group protocols. All protocols were shared orally, and, at times, the questions included multiple sub-questions. Attention to each sub-

question may not have been equal, which may have affected details needed to fully address the questions from different perspectives.

Finally, we base these findings on practices we observed during our visits to schools who were successfully identifying EL students for gifted services. We do not know if these practices are unique to schools that successfully identify EL students for gifted programs, because we did not visit schools with lower EL identification rates.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of the study of identification practices of ELs for gifted and talented programs. However, it is also critical to review the promising practices for improving identification of ELs for gifted and talented programs and to determine the extent to which they can be adopted or adapted to local schools and districts.

Future studies involving other states with gifted and talented identification and programming mandates and different cohorts may yield more insights into the interconnectedness of the EL Gifted Identification Theory of Change we proposed. Such research studies may promote attention to pathways leading to equitable representation of ELs in gifted and talented programs. The obvious and emergent gifts and talents of EL students must be nurtured through challenging and enriching academic opportunities in our schools. Educators must reject the "deficit detector" paradigm that rationalizes reasons for not identifying gifted EL

students and become “talent scouts” who recognize the diverse ways gifted EL populations manifest their talents.

References

Angelelli, C., Enright, K., & Valdes, G. (2002). *Developing the talents and abilities of linguistically gifted bilingual students: Guidelines for developing curriculum at the high school level* (RM02156). The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, University of Connecticut.

Bernal, E. M. (2002). Three ways to achieve a more equitable representation of culturally and linguistically different students in GT programs. *Roeper Review*, *24*(2), 82–88. https://doi.org/10.1080/02783190209554134

Blackburn, A. M., Cornish, L., & Smith, S. (2016). Gifted English language learners: Global understandings and Australian perspectives. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, *39*(4), 338–360. https://doi.org/10.1177/0162353216671834

Borland, J. H. (2003). The death of giftedness: Gifted education without gifted children. In J. H. Borland (Ed.), *Rethinking gifted education* (pp. 105–124). Teachers College Press.

Brice, A., & Brice, R. (2004). Identifying Hispanic gifted children: A screening. *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, *23*(1), 8–15. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F875687050402300103

Callahan, C. M. (2005). Identifying gifted students from underrepresented populations. *Theory into Practice*, *44*(2), 98–104. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4402_4

Callahan, C. M. (2018). Identification of gifted and talented students. In C. M. Callahan & H. L. Hertberg-Davis (Eds.), *Fundamentals of gifted education: Considering multiple perspectives* (pp. 94–102). Routledge.

Campbell, J. L., Quincy, C., Osserman, J., & Pedersen, O. K. (2013). Coding in-depth semistructured interviews: Problems of unitization and intercoder reliability and agreement. *Sociological Methods & Research, 42*(3), 294–320. https://doi.org/10.1177/0049124113500475

Card, D., & Giuliano, L. (2016). Universal screening increases the representation of low-income and minority students in gifted education. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *113*(48), 13678–13683. https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/113/48/13678.full.pdf

Carpenter, A. Y. (2019). *Stakeholders' conceptions of giftedness* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Connecticut.

Castellano, J. A., & Diaz, E. I. (2002). Introduction. In J. A. Castellano & E. I. Diaz (Eds.), *Reaching new horizons: Gifted and talented education for culturally and linguistically diverse students* (pp. xii–xxvi). Allyn & Bacon.

Clarenbach, J. (2015, September). Expanding the view of giftedness: Five districts share a mission to develop underrepresented students on the cusp of excellence. *School Administrator*, *72*(8), 18–32. https://www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=37855

Coleman, M. R., & Shah-Coltrane, S. (2011). *U-STARS~PLUS: Professional development kit manual*. Council for Exceptional Children.

Collier, V. P., & Thomas, W. P. (2017). Validating the power of bilingual schooling: Thirty-two years of large-scale, longitudinal research. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 37*, 203–217. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190517000034

Conger, D. (2009). Testing, time limits, and English learners: Does age of school entry affect how quickly students can learn English? *Social Science Research*, *38*(2), 383–396. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2008.08.002

Connery, C. E., Green, I. I. I., & Kaufman, J. C. (2019). The underrepresentation of CLD students in gifted and talented programs: Implications for law and practice. *University of Maryland Law Journal of Race, Religion, Gender, and Class, 19*(1), 81–101. https://digitalcommons.law.umaryland.edu/rrgc/vol19/iss1/5

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Sage.

Cummins, J. (2008). BICS and CALP: Empirical and theoretical status of the distinction. In B. Street & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education* (2nd ed., Vol. 2: Literacy, pp. 71–83). Springer Sciences & Business Media.

Davidson Gifted Education Database–State Gifted Education Policies. (n.d.). *Search database:Oklahoma*. http://www.davidsongifted.org/search-database/region/s10037

de Bernard, A. E., & Hofstra, U. (1985). Why Jose can't get in the gifted class: The bilingual child and standardized reading tests. *Roeper Review*, *8*(2), 80–82. https://doi.org/10.1080/02783198509552939

de Wet, C. F., & Gubbins, E. J. (2011). Teachers' beliefs about culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse gifted students: A quantitative study. *Roeper Review*, *33*(2), 97–108. https://doi.org/10.1080/02783193.2011.554157

Dixon, L. Q., Zhao, J., Shin, J.-Y., Wu, S., Su, J-H., Burgess-Brigham, R., Gezer, M. U., & Snow, C. (2012). What we know about second language acquisition: A synthesis from four perspectives. *Review of Educational Research*, *82*(1), 5–60. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654311433587

Education Commission of the States. (2014, November). *How is an "English language learner" defined in state policy?* http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbquestNB2?rep=ELL1402

Esquierdo, J. J., & Arreguin-Anderson, M. (2012). The "invisible" gifted and talented bilingual students: A current report on enrollment in GT programs. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, *35*(1), 35–47. https://doi.org/10.1177/0162353211432041

Fernandez, A. L., & Abe, J. (2018). Bias in cross-cultural neuropsychological testing: Problems and possible solutions. *Culture and Brain*, *6*(1), 1–35. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40167-017-0050-2

Fernandez, A. L., Gay, L., Lucky, L., & Gavilan, M. (1998). Teacher perceptions of gifted Hispanic limited English proficient students. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, *21*(3), 335–351. https://doi.org/10.1177/016235329802100305

Fillmore, L. W., & Snow, C. E. (2000). *What teachers need to know about language*. Center for Applied Linguistics, ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics. https://www.ventrislearning.com/wp-content/uploads/Wong_Fillmore-2000.pdf

Ford, D. Y. (2014). Underrepresentation of African American and Hispanic students in gifted education: Impact of social inequality, elitism, and colorblindness. In J. P. Bakken, F. E.

Obiakor & A. F. Rotatori (Eds.), *Gifted education: Current perspectives and issues* (pp. 101–126). Emerald Group Publishing.

Ford, D. Y., & Grantham, T. C. (2003). Providing access for culturally diverse gifted students: From deficit to dynamic thinking. *Theory Into Practice*, *42*(3), 217–225. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4203_8

Ford, D. Y., Grantham, T. C., & Whiting, G. W. (2008). Culturally and linguistically diverse students in gifted education: Recruitment and

retention issues. *Exceptional Children, 74*(3), 289–306. https://doi.org/10.1177/001440290807400302

Ford, D. Y., & Whiting, G. W. (2008). Recruiting and retaining underrepresented gifted students. In S. I. Pfeiffer (Ed.), *Handbook of giftedness in children* (pp. 293–308). Springer.

Gonzalez, G. (1974). Language, culture, and exceptional children. *Exceptional Children, 40*(8), 565–570. https://doi.org/10.1177/001440297404000802

Hakuta, K., Butler, Y. G., & Witt, D. (2000). *How long does it take English Learners to attain proficiency?* (Policy Report 2000-1). University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED443275

Harris, B., Plucker, J. A., Rapp, K. E., & Martinez, R. S. (2009). Identifying gifted and talented English language learns: A case study. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted, 32*(3), 368–393. https://doi.org/10.4219/jeg-2009-858

Harris, B., Rapp, K. E., Martinez, R. S., & Plucker, J. A. (2007). Identifying English language learners for gifted and talented programs: Current practices and recommendations for improvement. *Roeper Review, 29*(5), 26–29. https://doi.org/10.1080/02783193.2007.11869221

International Literacy Association. (2019). *The role of bilingualism in improving literacy achievement* [Literacy leadership brief].

https://literacyworldwide.org/docs/default-source/where-we-stand/ila-role-bilingualism-improving-literacy-achievement.pdf

Kearney, K. L., Cash, K., Adelson, J. L., Little, C. A., & O'Brien, R. L. (2017, April). *Promoting diversity in the referral process: Teacher ratings and other assessments across demographic groups* [Paper presentation]. The American Educational Research Association, San Antonio, TX, United States.

Kitano, M. K. (2003). What's missing in gifted education reform? In J. H. Borland (Ed.), *Rethinking gifted education* (pp. 159–170). Teachers College Press.

Kloosterman, V. I. (2002). The schoolwide enrichment model: Promoting diversity and excellence in gifted education. In J. A. Castellano & E. I. Diaz (Eds.), *Reaching new horizons for culturally and linguistically diverse students* (pp. 175–199). Allyn & Bacon.

Kogan, E. (2001). *Gifted bilingual students: A paradox?* Peter Lang.

Krashen, S. D., & Terrell, T. D. (1995). *The natural approach: Language acquisition in the classroom*. Prentice Hall Europe.

Lynch, M. C. (2018). *Educator perceptions of gifted English language learners* [Master's thesis, Western Kentucky University]. TopSCHOLAR. https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3100&context=theses

Makel, M. C., Matthews, M. S., Peters, S. J., Rambo-Hernandez, K., & Plucker, J. A. (2016, August 16). *How can so many students be invisible? Large percentages of American students perform above grade level*. Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy. http://education.jhu.edu/edpolicy/commentary/PerformAboveGradeLevel

Matthews, M. S. (2014). Advanced academics, inclusive education, and English language learners. In M. S. Matthews & J. A. Castellano (Eds.), *Talent development in English language learners* (pp. 11–14). Prufrock Press.

Matthews, M. S. (2018). Utilizing non-test assessment in identifying gifted and talented learners. In C. M. Callahan & H. L. Hertberg-Davis (Eds.), *Fundamentals of gifted education: Considering multiple perspectives* (pp. 135–145). Routledge.

Matthews, M. S., & Peters, S. J. (2018). Methods to increase the identification of students from traditionally underrepresented populations for gifted services. In S. I. Pfeiffer (Ed.), *APA handbook of giftedness and talent* (pp. 317–331). American Psychological Association. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0000038-021

McBee, M. T. (2006). A descriptive analysis of referral sources for gifted identification screening by race and socioeconomic status. *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education*, *17*(2), 103–111. https://doi.org/10.4219/jsge-2006-686

McBee, M. T., Peters, S. J., & Miller, E. M. (2016). The impact of the nomination stage on gifted program identification: A comprehensive psychometric analysis. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, *60*(4), 258–278. https://doi.org/10.1177/0016986216656256

McClain, M. C., & Pfeiffer, S. I. (2012). Identification of gifted students in the United States today: A look at state definitions, policies, and practices. *Journal of Applied School Psychology, 28*(1), 59–88. https://doi.org/10.1080/15377903.2012.643757

McCoach, D. B., Gable, R. K., & Madura, J. P. (2013). *Instrument development in the affective domain: School and corporate applications* (3rd ed.). Springer.

McCoach, D. B., Siegle, D., Callahan, C., Gubbins, E. J., & Hamilton, R. (2016, December). *The identification gap: When just as good isn't enough* [Poster presentation]. The 2016 Institute of Education Sciences Principal Investigators Meeting, Washington, DC, United States.

McFarland, J., Hussar, B., Zhang, J., Wang, X., Wang, K., Hein, S., Diliberti, M., Forrest Cataldi, E., Bullock Mann, F., & Barmer, A. (2019). *The condition of education 2019* (NCES 2019-144). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2019144

Melesky, T. J. (1985). Identifying and providing for the Hispanic gifted child. *The Journal for the National Association for Bilingual Education, 9*(3), 43–56. https://doi.org/10.1080/08855072.1985.10668498

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Moore, J. L., III, Ford, D. Y., & Milner, H. R. (2005). Recruitment is not enough: Retaining African American students in gifted education. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, *49*(1), 51–67. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F001698620504900106

Mun, R. U., Hemmler, V., Langley, S., Ware, S., Gubbins, E. J., Callahan, C. M., McCoach, D. B., & Siegle, D. (2020). Identifying and serving English learners in gifted education: Looking back and moving forward. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, *43*(4), 297–335. https://doi.org/10.1177/0162353220955230

Mun, R. U., Langley, S. D., Ware, S., Gubbins, E. J., Siegle, D., Callahan, C. M., McCoach, D. B., & Hamilton, R. (2016). *Effective practices for identifying and serving English learners in gifted education: A systematic review of the literature*. National Center for Research on Gifted Education, University of Connecticut.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2013). *English language learners*. http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=96

National Center for Education Statistics. (2017, March). *English Language Learners in Public Schools*. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgf.asp

National Education Association. (2008). *NEA policy brief: English language learners face unique challenges*. http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.190.2895&rep=rep1&type=pdf

O'Brien, R. L., Little, C. A., Kearney, K. L., Adelson, J. L., & Cash, K. (2017, April). *Professional development and teacher consistency in use of a rating scale* [Poster Presentation]. The American Educational Research Association, San Antonio, TX, United States.

Peters, S. J., & Engerrand, K. G. (2016). Equity and excellence: Proactive efforts in the identification of underrepresented students for gifted and talented services. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, *60*(3), 159–171. https://doi.org/10.1177/0016986216643165

Plucker, J. A., & Callahan, C. M. (2014). Research on giftedness and gifted education: Status of the field and considerations for the future. *Exceptional Children*, *80*(4), 390–406. https://doi.org/10.1177/0014402914527244

Reed, B., & Railsback, J. (2003). *Strategies and resources for mainstream teachers of English language learners* [By request series]. Northwest

Regional Educational Laboratory. https://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/ell.pdf

Renzulli, J. S. (1994–1995). Teachers as talent scouts. *Educational Leadership, 52*(4), 75–81.

Renzulli, J. S., & Brandon, L. E. (2017). Common sense about the under-representation issue: A school-wide approach to increase participation of diverse students in programs that develop talents and gifted behaviours in young people. *International Journal for Talent Development and Creativity, 5*(2), 71–84. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327109209_Common_Sense_About_the_Under-Representation_Issue

Renzulli, J. S., & Reis, S. M. (2014). *The schoolwide enrichment model: A how-to guide for talent development* (3rd ed.). Prufrock Press.

Robertson, K., & Ford, F. (2019). *Language acquisition: An overview*. https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/language-acquisition-overview#h-stages-of-language-acquisition

Saldana, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Siegle, D. (2018, July). *Keynote: Why increasing equity in gifted education is important and what you can do about it* [Conference Keynote]. Boise, ID, United States: Edufest. https://www.edufest.org/

Siegle, D., Gubbins, E. J., O'Rourke, P., Dulong Langley, S., Mun, R. U., Luria, S. R., Little, C. A., McCoach, D. B., Knupp, T., Callahan, C. M., & Plucker, J. A. (2016). Barriers to underserved students' participation in gifted programs and possible solutions. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, *39*(2), 103–131. https://doi.org/10.1177/0162353216640930

Sparks, S. D. (2016, May 11). *Teaching English-language learners: What does the research tells us?* https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2016/05/11/teaching-english-language-learnerswhat-does-the-research.html

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Subotnik, R. F., Olszewski-Kubilius, P., & Worrell, F. C. (2011). Rethinking giftedness and gifted education: A proposed direction forward based on psychological science. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, *12*(1), 3–54. https://doi.org/10.1177/1529100611418056

Swanson, J. D., Russell, L. W., & Anderson, L. (2019). A model for growing teacher talent scouts: Decreasing underrepresentation of gifted students. In S. Smith (Ed.), *Handbook of giftedness and talent development in the Asia-Pacific* (pp. 1–20). Singapore: Springer.

Thompson, K. D. (2017). English learners' time to reclassification: An analysis. *Educational Policy*, *32*(3), 330–363. https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904815598394

Umansky, I. M., & Reardon, S. F. (2014). Reclassification patterns among Latino English learner students in bilingual, dual immersion, and English immersion classrooms. *American Educational Research Journal*, *51*(5), 879–912. https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831214545110

U.S. Department of Education. (2016, September). *Non-regulatory guidance: English learners and title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).* https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essatitleiiiguidenglishlearners92016.pdf

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. (2014). *Civil rights data collection, data snapshot: College and career readiness*. http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-college-and-career-readiness-snapshot.pdf

U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition. (2019, October). *The top languages spoken by English learners (ELs) in the United States: Fast facts*. https://ncela.ed.gov/files/fast_facts/olea-top-languages-fact-sheet-20191021-508.pdf

Valdes, G. (2002). *Understanding the special giftedness of young interpreters* (RM02158). The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, University of Connecticut.

Wiggin, L. P. (2017). Demography in America: Gifted education for a growing population of English language learners. *Indiana Journal of Law and Social Equality, 5*(2), 301–312. https://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1066&context=ijlse

Worrell, F. C. (2014). Ethnically diverse students. In J. A. Plucker & C. M. Callahan (Eds.), *Critical issues and practices in gifted education* (2nd ed., pp. 237–253). Prufrock Press.

Yafouri, L. E. (2019, April 30). Identifying and supporting gifted ELLs: An inclusive framework for finding gifted and talented students can ensure that English language learners don’t slip through the cracks. *Edutopia*. https://www.edutopia.org/article/identifying-andsupporting

Table 1

EL School Demographics by Type of Community and Free or Reduced-price Lunch

School Code	State/ Location[1]	Type of Community	# of Students	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (%)	Title I School
1-1-A	SE	city	647	99.5	Yes
1-1-B	SE	suburban	551	99.5	Yes
1-2-A	SE	rural	548	76.3	Yes
1-3-A	SE	suburban	660	97.9	Yes
1-3-B	SE	city	384	99.2	Yes
2-1-A	MW	city	480	96.7	Yes
2-1-B	MW	city	795	94.1	Yes
2-2-A	MW	city	401	50.1	Yes
2-2-B	MW	city	1,747	74.2	No
2-3-A	MW	suburban	576	88.5	Yes
3-1-A	S	rural	994	99.7	Yes
3-1-B	S	suburban	1,252	64.8	Yes
3-2-A	S	city	563	82.1	Yes
3-2-B	S	city	514	61.5	Yes
3-3-A	S	suburban	828	57.4	Yes
3-3-B	S	suburban	638	85.4	Yes

[1]Location: MW=Midwest, S=South, SE=Southeast

Note: 3 states, 9 districts, 16 schools.

Table 2

Sample Codebook Descriptors

Code	Level 0=Parent 1=Child 2=Grandchild	Definition	Sample Text	Exclusion Criteria
PD_gifted and talented teachers	2	Responsible for working with identified gifted and talented students in various service delivery models and engaging in professional development opportunities related to educating gifted and talented students	"They have professional learning communities because she has the biggest group of [gt] teachers so they break up into smaller groups and do that, and then they talk about what's working and what's not, you know. But what works at one school doesn't necessarily work at the other."	Do not use this code for individuals *providing* the PD, only for *receiving* the PD. Providing PD should be coded as a role and responsibility for the provider under human resources (above).

Code	Level 0=Parent 1=Child 2=Grandchild	Definition	Sample Text	Exclusion Criteria
PD_general education classrooms	2	Responsible for working with identified gifted and talented students in general education classroom and engaging in professional development opportunities related to educating gifted and talented students	"They actually invite the cluster teachers to come after school for 2 ½ hours and they rotate through rigorous activities that you can do with gifted students, and so I'm thinking that at the elementary level we're going to have to get back to doing some things like that, but it would totally be on an 'if you want to come' and we can't require that, so."	Do not use this code for individuals *providing* the PD, only for *receiving* the PD. Providing PD should be coded as a role and responsibility for the provider under human resources (above).
PD_gifted and talented coordinator	2	Responsible for overseeing all aspects of the gifted and talented	"I'm also a lead for the State so I get to . . . hear it all	Do not use this code for individuals *providing* the PD,

Code	Level 0=Parent 1=Child 2=Grandchild	Definition	Sample Text	Exclusion Criteria
		programs and services and engaging in professional development opportunities related to educating gifted and talented students	firsthand and then I get to learn from other LEAs and then I bring that back and we figure out how we can incorporate that with what we're doing."	only for *receiving* the PD. Providing PD should be coded as a role and responsibility for the provider under human resources (above).

Table 3

Identification Tools by Number of Schools by State and Across Schools

	# of Schools by State			Total	Percent
Cognitive Ability/Intelligence Tests	**1**	**2**	**3**		
Cog*AT* Cognitive Abilities Test	5	4	0	9	56
NNAT Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test	2	4	2	8	50
KBIT Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test	2	1	2	5	31
OLSAT Otis Lennon School Ability Test	2	0	2	4	25
Bateria III Woodcock Muñoz	2	0	1	3	19
WISC Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children	1	1	1	3	19
Raven's Progressive Matrices	2	0	1	3	19
RIAS Reynolds Intellectual Assessment System	1	0	1	2	13
DAS Differential Ability Scales	0	0	2	2	13
CTONI Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence	2	0	0	2	13
S-FRIT Slosson Full Range Intelligence Test	0	0	2	2	13
RIST Reynolds Intellectual Screening Test	1	0	0	1	6
WPPSI Wechsler Preschool Primary Scale of Intelligence	0	1	0	1	6
TOMAGS Test of Mathematical Abilities for Gifted Students	0	1	0	1	6
KABC Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children	0	0	1	1	6
WISC Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children–Spanish	0	0	1	1	6
UNIT Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test	0	0	1	1	6

Achievement Tests	# of Schools by State			Total	Percent
	1	2	3		
ITBS Iowa Tests of Basic Skills	3	0	4	7	44
MAP Measures of Academic Progress	0	2	2	4	25
State Comprehensive Assessment Test	0	0	3	3	19
PARCC Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers	0	2	0	2	13
State End of Grade Tests	2	0	0	2	13
State Standards Assessment	0	0	2	2	13
District Assessment Test	0	0	2	2	13
Woodcock Johnson Achievement Test	2	0	0	2	13
SAT Stanford Achievement Test	0	0	2	2	13
Aprenda (SAT in Spanish)	0	0	2	2	13
State Assessment Program	0	1	0	1	6
ACT American College Test	0	1	0	1	6
Aspire ACT	0	1	0	1	6
State Measures of Academic Success	0	1	0	1	6
Star Reading and Math	0	1	0	1	6
Logramos	0	0	1	1	6
iReady	1	0	0	1	6

Rating Scales	# of Schools by State			Total	Percent
	1	2	3		
Teacher rating	0	2	6	8	50
Parent rating	0	2	4	6	38
Student rating	0	1	4	5	31
Gifted Behaviors Characteristics Checklist	0	0	4	4	25
Slocumb-Payne Teacher Perception Inventory	2	1	0	3	19
KOI Kingore Observation Inventory	0	2	0	2	13
Creative Thinking	2	0	0	2	13

CAP Creativity Assessment Packet	0	0	2	2	13
SIGS Scales for Identifying Gifted Students	0	1	0	1	6
SRBCSS Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students	0	1	0	1	6
GES Gifted Evaluation Scale	0	1	0	1	6
GRS Gifted Rating Scales	1	0	0	1	6
Administrator rating	0	1	0	1	6
TOPS Teacher's Observation of Potential in Students	1	0	0	1	6

Table 4

EL Gifted Identification Procedures and Practices

School Code	Universal Screening	Nonverbal Assessments	Cut Scores	Native Language Assessments	Talent Pool	Performance Assessment	Identification Committee
1-1-A	•	•	•	•	•		•
1-1-B	•		•	•	•		•
1-2-A	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
1-3-A	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
1-3-B	•	•	•		•	•	•
2-1-A	•	•	•	•			•
2-1-B	•	•	•	•	•		•
2-2-A	•	•	•		•		
2-2-B				•	•	•	•
2-3-A	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
3-1-A	•		•	•		•	•
3-1-B	•	•	•	•		•	•
3-2-A	•	•	•	•	•		•
3-2-B			•	•		•	•
3-3-A	•	•	•	•		•	•
3-3-B	•	•		•			•
Total Schools	**14**	**12**	**14**	**14**	**10**	**9**	**15**

Note: 3 states, 9 districts, 16 schools.

Table 5

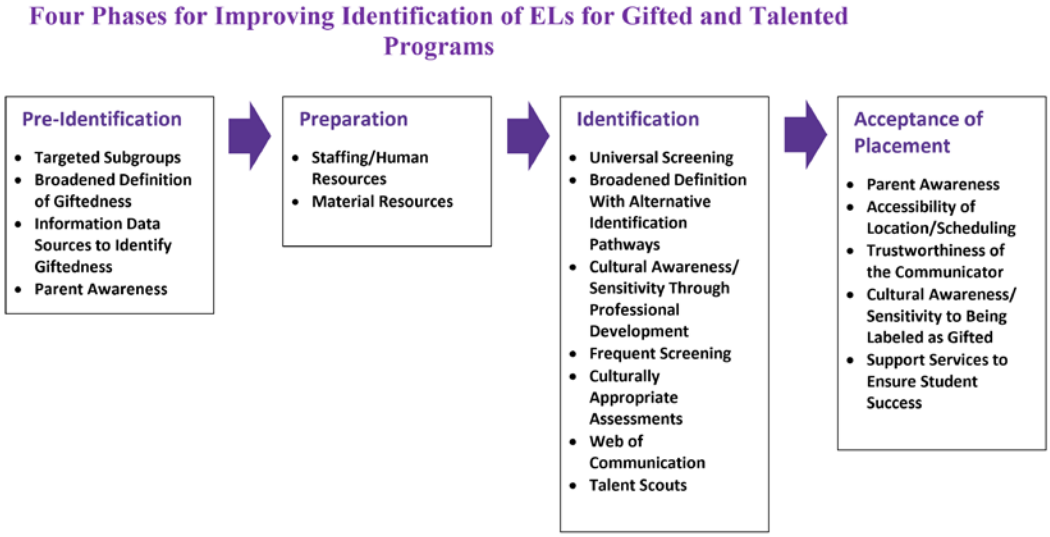
Professional Development (PD) Opportunities Related to Identifying EL Gifted Students

School Code	PD on Gifted EL Students	PD on Gifted EL Students Goal	PD Communications Between EL and Gifted Departments	PD for Parents. Guardians, or Caretakers
1-1-A			•	
1-1-B		•		
1-2-A		•		•
1-3-A				•
1-3-B		•		
2-1-A		•		
2-1-B			•	
2-2-A			•	•
2-2-B		•		
2-3-A	•			
3-1-A				
3-1-B	•			
3-2-A	•			
3-2-B	•			
3-3-A	•			
3-3-B			•	
Total	**5**	**5**	**4**	**3**

Note: 3 states, 9 districts, 16 schools.

Figure 1

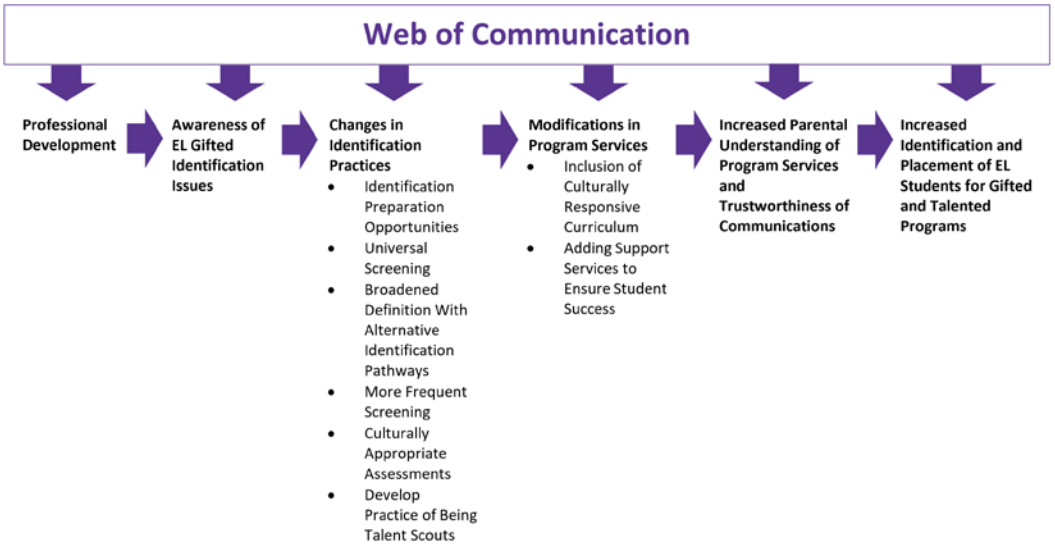
Four phases for improving identification of ELs for gifted and talented program.



Note. EL = English learners.

Figure 2

Web of Communication process for improving identification of ELs for gifted and talented programs.



Note. EL = English learners.