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php

parenting for high potential

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Celebrating NAGC's Commitment to Parents:
25 Years of *Parenting for High Potential* and Much More

By Tracy Ford Inman, Ed.D., Guest Editor



I remember receiving my first *Parenting for High Potential (PHP)* as a new NAGC member of the Parent and Community Division (now Parent, Family, & Community Network) in the 1990s. I felt as if it were written just for me, a parent struggling to understand her 2e son. As a long-time member and now beginning my second term as Parent Representative on the NAGC Board of Directors, I am fortunate to have benefitted from the robust resources such as *PHP* that have been developed by so many talented volunteers and staff. This year marks *PHP's* 25th year; it continues to be a key vehicle to address families' needs.

In September 1996, Carolyn Callahan penned the first "President's Column" in *PHP's* premier issue: *"The magazine represents a venture that will give the National Association for Gifted Children an opportunity to forge partnerships with parents in a commitment to developing the full array of talents in children. As an organization which has long been committed to excellence in education and maximizing potential of children, we realize that neither parents nor schools can be successful in that venture alone."*

She then outlined the main purposes of the magazine, which continue to guide *PHP* today. For example, she promised that *"we will share ideas for negotiating the day-to-day process of aiding in the full development of your child's capabilities and healthy social and emotional adjustment."* So many articles and columns over the years have done just that: "The Buzz," "Special Features," "Consumer Corner" (which morphed into the "Holiday Toy List"), "Home and School Report," and "News from the Nation," among others.

Additionally, the magazine was intended *"to act as a sounding board for your concerns."* Concerns have been addressed in a variety of ways from feature articles to the numerous parenting columns that evolved over the years: "Parent to Parent," "Parenting Q&A," "Parenting Forum," "Effective Advocates," and others. It was also intended *"to entice you to share your skills, views, and strategies with one another and to engage your children in being part of our magazine."*

Of course, numerous articles and columns stemmed directly from parent questions. Readers contributed in other ways as well, such as writing articles or submitting anecdotes for the humor column "Life in the High-Potential Lane." Children were engaged, too, through columns like "Kids' Kaleidoscope" and "Resource Round-Up" (later "Tools of the Trade").

Throughout the years, the columns' names changed, the column authors rotated, and the columns themselves changed depending on the readers' needs and the editor's professional insight. Editors changed, too, as did cover designs, format, number of pages, even number of issues. What hasn't changed is a focus on putting the needs of parents, families, and communities first.

Thanks to the commitment of many NAGC parent members, state association leaders, and other volunteers, NAGC has

Key Milestones for Supporting Parents at NAGC

Mid 1990s

NAGC regulations designate a parent representative on the board of directors

Parent & Community Division formed

1996

Inaugural *PHP*, James Alvino, editor



2000

Donald Treffinger, editor

2004

Parent Outreach Specialist position created

2005

Introduction of *Connecting for High Potential*, linking teachers and parents in serving gifted children



2008

Jennifer Jolly, editor

2009

First extensive toolkit of resources for parents: *Mile Marker Series: Your Roadmap for Supporting Gifted Children*



developed additional resources beyond *PHP* to help parents navigate schools, become stronger advocates, and find resources and professionals to help them support their gifted children. Highlights include:

- ***Mile Marker Series: Your Roadmap for Supporting Gifted Children.*** This CD-ROM allowed users to enter the resource roadway wherever it made most sense to them. This GPS for the world of gifted education helped thousands navigate their journeys.
- The award-winning book ***Parenting Gifted Children: The Authoritative Guide from the National Association for Gifted Children***. Comprising updated and revised articles of *Parenting for High Potential* from 1996–2009, this book provided easy access to the best *PHP* had to offer.
- The e-book ***Starting & Sustaining a Parent Group to Support Gifted Children*** was available from the website free of charge (and still is!).
- **Brochures** published in both English and Spanish.
- **Parent Days** at the NAGC Annual Convention.
- A second edition of the best of *PHP:* ***Success Strategies for Parenting Gifted Kids: Expert Advice from the National Association for Gifted Children***.
- Perhaps the most popular resource created has been the ***Timely Information for Parents (TIP) Sheets*** initiated in 2016. These colorful one-page front-and-back resources can be downloaded, read, and shared at no cost.

TIP Sheets have also proven popular with educators, psychologists, and others. Pertinent topics range from *Gifted 101* to *Perfectionism* to *Finding a Mental Health Professional*. And when COVID-19 hit, we were quick to produce *Supporting Your Gifted Child During COVID-19* (in both Spanish and English) and *Managing Grief & Anxiety During COVID-19*. We understand the importance of providing reliable, research-backed information in a variety of products, topics, and formats.

In this issue celebrating 25 years of *PHP*, you will find an homage to the publication. From graphics to columns, we have juxtaposed the old with the new to provide you a nostalgic view, while revisiting topics that have always been important to families of gifted children. We have also included a timeline that highlights milestones in the growth of parent-focused leadership and resources at NAGC.

In 1996, Carolyn Callahan closed her inaugural column: *"In* Parenting for High Potential *we hope to be able to guide you in creating an environment and in crafting experiences where the potential for all children can grow and prosper."* For decades, *PHP*—together with the Parent Editorial Content & Advisory Board (PECAB) and the Parent, Family, & Community Network—have taken that charge to heart. Sincerest gratitude goes to editors James Alvino, the late Donald Treffinger, Jennifer Jolly, and Kathleen Nilles for their strong leadership, innovation, and heart for advanced learners. I invite all of you to get involved in NAGC and the Parent, Family & Community Network to strengthen products and services for parents for the next 25 years. Enjoy!

Tracy Ford Inman, Ed.D., now a gifted education consultant, recently retired as associate director from The Center for Gifted Studies at Western Kentucky University. She currently serves as the parent representative on the NAGC Board of Directors as well as KAGE Foundation chair for the Kentucky Association for Gifted Education. She is the mother of two gifted young men, including one who is 2e.

2010

Parenting Gifted Children: The Authoritative Guide from the National Association for Gifted Children (published by Prufrock Press)



2011

Starting & Sustaining a Parent Group to Support Gifted Children e-book published **bit.ly/3hfAzJK**



2014

Kathleen Nilles, editor

Parent Editorial Content & Advisory Board formed, uniting all parent committees under one umbrella

2015

Recursos Para los Padres de Familia: Helping Your Gifted Child to Succeed (First brochure for parents in Spanish) **bit.ly/3lrFs4o**



2016

Timely Information for Parents (TIP) Sheets launched **bit.ly/NAGC_TIP**



2019

Success Strategies for Parenting Gifted Kids: Expert Advice from the National Association for Gifted Children (published by Prufrock Press)

Name and focus broadened for Parent & Family Network: Now the Parent, Family, & Community Network

2020

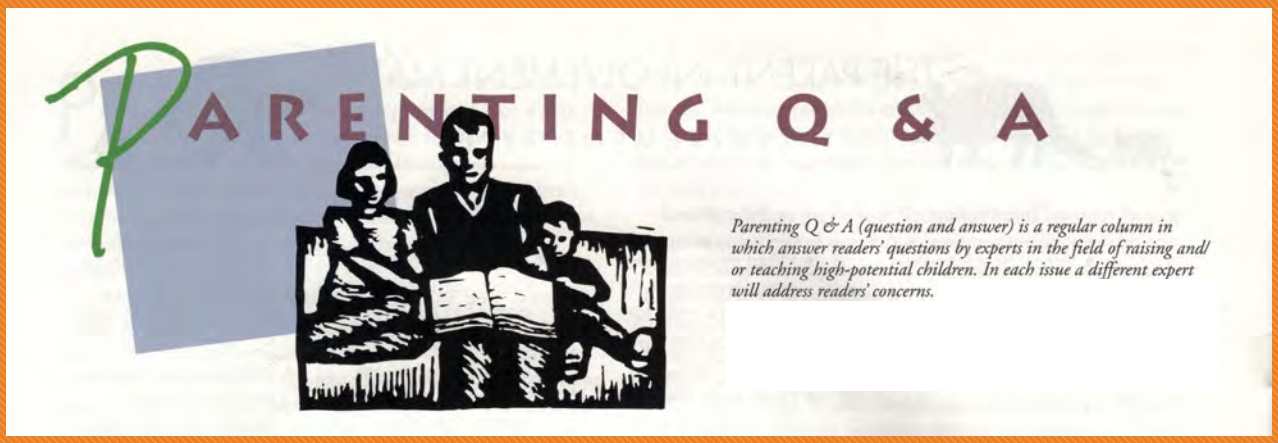
Numerous COVID-19 resources and *At-Home Summer Fun for Creative Kids & Families*



2021

Parenting For High Potential celebrates 25th anniversary





In the late 1990s, parents wrote NAGC with their most pressing questions, and *PHP* asked experts to respond. In one issue, parents asked about the value of IQ testing, which we revisit in 2021.

Quality Assessment Data for Gifted Services: More than an IQ Score

By Joni M. Lakin, Ph.D.

In 1998, parents posed this question to experts: ***"I think my child is very bright. Should I ask the school district to give my child an IQ test?"*** Two decades later, parents are no less interested in whether their child needs to be identified for services or if their child's placement is appropriate.[1]

Over the last 20 years, much research has been conducted on best practices for identifying gifted children. The recommendations include a multi-pronged approach using culturally appropriate assessment tools, observations, and portfolios. And, while assessments have come a long way in helping identify gifted children, an individual's IQ (Intelligent Quotient) is sometimes used as a synonym for general cognitive ability or aptitude.

In 1998, Dr. Carolyn Callahan and Howard Eichner began their essay response with a question, *"Why [do] you wish to know your child's IQ?"* Even today, some parents want this single data point to compare to mythological cut scores for "genius" and other lofty labels. But just as in 1998, I believe there is no need to press for additional testing unless you are concerned that your child is being underestimated, not receiving appropriate challenge

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in the classroom, or is missing out on service programs that may be appropriate. Parents should seek additional testing only when they have concerns about the type of education their child is receiving.

Assessment data should not be used just to label students, but for schools and families to make instructional choices and place students in the most appropriate services. A quality assessment process that informs these decisions should have these features:[2]

- Aligns to the services that the school/district offers.
- Considers both current achievement *and potential*, including ability, motivation, creativity, and other factors related to readiness for academic challenge.
- Is culturally responsive, recognizes potential among students who have not had the same opportunities as peers, and takes into account local context.
- Allows students to demonstrate need in specific areas (e.g., reading, mathematics).

Aligns to the Services Students Receive

So much emphasis is placed on identification for gifted education services that educators and parents sometimes overlook whether the identification process will lead to helpful services for the student. Alignment between identification and services means that the data collected during identification is relevant to the actual program and helps educators determine if a service is appropriate.[3] A too-common example of misalignment is when students are required to demonstrate high achievement and ability, but then services involve brain games and creative projects unrelated to the areas of achievement or potential demonstrated. A good example of alignment is when achievement and ability tests are used to place students in accelerated classes in relevant subjects.

Considers Current Achievement and Potential—Including Ability, Motivation, Creativity, and More

As Callahan and Eichner's 1998 article emphasized, ability scores are just one piece of information about a student's current or potential performance. A strong identification process is comprehensive, including both ability and achievement information but also data about motivation, creativity, leadership, or other characteristics relevant to the services offered.[4] Assessments of some of these characteristics might include teacher- or parent-rating forms or student portfolios.

(Continues on p. 22)



Academic Acceleration: How far Have We Come?



By Keri M. Guilbault, Ed.D.

In 2012, former NAGC Parent & Community Network Chair Dr. Christy McGee wrote a "Parent-to-Parent" column in *Parenting for High Potential*[1] on the "ifs" and "buts" of acceleration. Her article focused on three questions that parents often ask when considering acceleration for their child. The original article appeared a few years before the release of two key reports on the subject: *A Nation Empowered: Evidence Trumps the Excuses Holding Back America's Brightest Students*[2] and the updated *Developing Academic Acceleration Policies: Whole Grade, Early Entrance, & Single Subject.*[3] Although some issues have remained the same over the past decade, we have seen some progress toward making acceleration options more available to advanced learners. This article revisits McGee's earlier questions and responses and provides additional insights and resources from research in the field. Let's compare *then* and *now* to see how far we've come.

I know my child needs to be accelerated, but what will happen later on when my child wants to play sports and isn't physically as strong as other children?

Then: McGee responded, *"Physical prowess is a factor that can make grade-skipping an issue. In middle and high school, physical maturity can present problems because many sports are indeed grade-based."*

Now: This question is one I still hear from parents and caregivers. Parents sometimes feel like they must choose between developing their child's intellectual strengths or their athletic talents. Parents, particularly those who were involved in competitive sports in their youth, may fear that their child will be at a disadvantage having to compete with older, more physically developed athletes. There are a few things to consider:

- Typically there is already a wide range of age and physical development in any grade, K–12.
- Although some club sports, competitive sports, and high school athletic teams group by grade, many also group by age, ability, or even weight (think wrestling, swimming, soccer, tennis, cross country, etc.)
- Some varsity sports programs allow younger players with exceptional ability on their teams.

Does another year of physical development help those who may have their eye on being recruited for university athletic scholarships? Perhaps, but the same gifted student may just as well qualify for an academic scholarship and still enjoy their sport. Choosing to hold a child back who needs and would greatly benefit from acceleration just because they may possibly become a college Division I athlete several

years down the road is a difficult decision to justify. Who knows if the child's interest and passion for the sport will sustain over time? It is important to note that research on adults who were grade skipped when they were children overwhelmingly report positive satisfaction, and they wish they had either accelerated or been accelerated earlier.[4]

If my child is accelerated, are there any social and emotional situations of which I should be aware?

Then: *"Social and emotional issues are always a worry for parents and ones that are often generated by school personnel. The answer to this question is that it depends on the child. If the child is gregarious and able to make friends easily, then acceleration should not be a problem…For children who think and act like their older peers, acceleration can be exactly what they need."*

Now: Concern over social and emotional issues remain at the top of the list of reasons why administrators, educators, and even parents are cautious about acceleration;[5] however, there is a significant body of research that indicates carefully selected accelerated students show little to no social-emotional harm from acceleration. In fact, grade skipping and subject acceleration can lead to improvements in social-emotional well-being because they allow the gifted learner to finally have access to true peers or older students to whom they can relate better than age-mates. Most accelerated gifted learners do well socially and psychologically.[6] For more information on related research, see chapters 2, 3 and 6 in *A Nation Empowered* (Vol. 2). Key findings are provided in the box below.

What should I do if my child seems to be significantly ahead of his or her peers?

Then: *"I recommend that parents become very familiar with the literature on giftedness…Having a basic understanding of giftedness before seeking out assessment will help parents communicate with a psychologist or psychometrician about their child's strengths and weaknesses."*

Now: Becoming informed on giftedness and the research on acceleration can certainly be to your advantage when approaching your child's school. Most educators and administrators receive very little formal training, if any, on the needs and abilities of this unique group of students. Few understand the practical implications of an IQ score for gifted programming or how advanced ability in a subject area impacts gifted learners in the classroom. There are several tools to help guide



Key Findings in *A Nation Empowered*

Chapter 2: The Academic, Socialization, and Psychological Effects of Acceleration: Research Synthesis[7]

- The main conclusion is that academic acceleration produces notable academic gains regardless of the category of acceleration or form.
- Acceleration produces small-to-moderate social-emotional gains for gifted and talented students.

Chapter 3: Effects of Academic Acceleration on the Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Students[8]

- Acceleration has positive effects on the academic as well as affective (social and emotional) lives of students.
- The effects on the affective realm are not as robust and straightforward as effects on the cognitive realm.
- Results of acceleration on psychological adjustment (i.e., feelings about self and measures of well-being) are positive but small in terms of effect.
- There are not enough studies of diverse students to make the same claims regarding these students.

Chapter 6: Long-Term Effects of Educational Acceleration[9]

- Longitudinal studies indicate that students who were accelerated have few regrets about their acceleration.
- In the long-term, students who were accelerated demonstrate exceptional achievements as adults.
- Acceleration has a positive impact on both careers and life satisfaction.



the acceleration process and decision-making such as the *Iowa Acceleration Scale* (3rd ed.), a research-based tool that helps schools assess the appropriateness of whole-grade or subject acceleration for students K–8.[10] Knowing your state's policy on acceleration also will be helpful in discussions with your child's school. In most cases (but not all), school districts are permitted by state policies and regulations to develop their own acceleration policies if they choose to. You can look up your state's regulations at **www.accelerationinstitute.org/Resources/Policy/By_State**.

Over the past few decades, we have learned that there are many benefits to acceleration. It is a low-cost strategy for schools and is one of the most researched and effective best practices for gifted children. Parents and caregivers also now have a wide variety of tools for their advocacy toolbox that will help them as they navigate this process in their child's school. As we move forward, and eventually look back on where we were in 2021, it is my hope that we will see all states permitting acceleration and more school districts utilizing acceleration strategies to ensure equitable access to an appropriate education for our most advanced learners.

Resources

Acceleration Institute – **www.accelerationinstitute.org.** Offers a plethora of research, videos, acceleration stories, and more about academic acceleration.

A Nation Empowered: Evidence Trumps the Excuses Holding Back America's Brightest Students – **bit.ly/3DlQD4X**. Follows the 2004 *A Nation Deceived* report (**bit.ly/3oLsMY2**) and discusses changes that occurred over the decade in terms of how research has been applied to educational policy and how to use the findings to make informed decisions on acceleration.

Developing Academic Acceleration Policies: Whole Grade, Early Entrance, & Single Subject – **bit.ly/3ab3p9B**. Provides research-based guidelines for local and state acceleration policies.

Iowa Acceleration Scale (3rd ed.) – **bit.ly/2YnkjPZ**. Assists schools in evaluating the appropriateness of acceleration for students.

Author's Note

Keri M. Guilbault, Ed.D., serves on the NAGC Board of Directors as treasurer and is a former chair of the NAGC Parent & Community Network. She is an assistant professor of Gifted Education at Johns Hopkins University and parent of an accelerated, profoundly gifted son. Follow her on Twitter @drkerig.

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Technology: We've Come a Long Way—from Web Basics to Rich Online Learning Experiences

By Allison and Daniel Bemiss

In the very first issue of *Parenting for High Potential*, "Kids' Kaleidoscope" explored technology, which was a relatively new innovation in 1996, through a list of interesting websites, safety ideas, and tips for accessing the web.


KIDS' KALEIDOSCOPE

Soaring Through the Internet

PLAY IT SAFE ON-LINE: BE NET-SMART!

BASIC TIPS FOR SURFING THE WEB

Tips included contemporary wisdom as:

- *"To move from one web page to another, simply click on any item that is underlined, boxed, in a different color, or marked by a graphic."*
- *"Web pages have addresses called URL's that begin with 'http://".*
- *"Some of these addresses can be complicated so take your time when typing them in and double check all letters and numbers."*

In 2021, we are way beyond those basics (especially after COVID-19), so as we pay homage to that first technology feature, we provide an updated view. We hope that you will read this column with the children in your life, taking time to discuss, explore, and play.

"Virtual Field Trip Vibes"—complete with QR codes, so you don't have to take your time typing in letters and numbers — replaces the 1996 "Soaring Through the Web," which listed sites for kids to explore. Another advancement in technology is the abundance of videos available online that allow you to explore the world. Go to YouTube to search a topic you're interested in. Use "vr" or "360"with your search term(s) and you will find loads of virtual field trips. Many work with virtual reality goggles for an immersive experience.

Now that so many students already know more than adults do about surfing the web and using social media, and many are learning how to create the code needed to develop online games, we have created "Code, Create, and Connect" to replace "Basic Tips for Surfing the Web" from the inaugural issue.



Why Should We Unplug Together?

While there are many wonderful experiences and learning opportunities available at the touch of our fingertips with technology, it is important to be mindful of the unintended consequences of too much technology. An increase in time spent on social media or devices has been tied to the following concerns:[1]

- Reduced physical activity for all ages and impaired fine motor skills for younger children.
- Increased depression, anxiety, and self-concept.
- Reduction of self-regulation and self-soothing strategies.
- Limited time spent building face-to-face interpersonal relationships.

Ways to Unwind Together

- Take a walk outside, notice three things you see, two things you hear, and one thing you're grateful for.
- Dig out those old gameboards, decks of cards, or dice! Practice logic, laugh, and play together.
- Pick a place you'd love to visit! Research recipes from that area; find a favorite food and make it together.
- Volunteer together: Walk dogs at the shelter, make cards for an assisted living facility, donate supplies to a youth organization, or prepare a meal for a homeless shelter. The sky is the limit here.

In the last two decades, technological developments have exploded. Technology we now take for granted, such as smart phones, wireless technology, the internet, and various social media platforms, either did not exist or were just coming into use. In fact, in addition to using technology for enrichment, some gifted students use technology far beyond what anyone dreamed back in 1996. Some students use technology as their primary learning mode via immersive online schools, online specialty courses, virtual mentoring, and other educational experiences. And, the impact of COVID-19 forced nearly all students to adapt to using technology in one way or another in the classroom.

If used properly, these tools can enrich our lives, expand our knowledge, and create new social and professional networks across the globe. As we celebrate and utilize these and other new technology-based tools, parents should take care to provide supervision so that their children do not come to harm via some of these tools or because they over-use technology, and also help them to learn how to be discerning consumers of content. Soon enough our children will be teaching us about the technology of the future.

Authors' Note

Allison and Daniel Bemiss have each worked in education for 17 years. Allison is the author of two hands-on STEAM books and is an early child consultant (PreK–Grade 3) for Green River Regional Educational Cooperative (GRREC). Daniel is a middle school social studies teacher in Bowling Green, KY. He is the recipient of the 2020 Campbellsville University Excellence in Teaching Award.

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Virtual Field Trip Vibes

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATORY
www.amnh.org/exhibitions/butterflies/virtual-field-trip

HISTORY VIEW
https://historyview.org

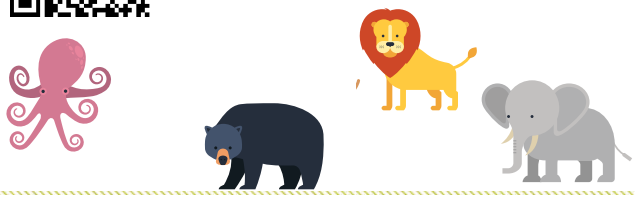
GOOGLE EARTH
bit.ly/3FnxfGj

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
www.nga.gov/learn/teachers.html

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC 360 VIDEOS
www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLivjPDl-t6ApRq22sn082ZCC9893XtV8xc

MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
www.amrevmuseum.org/virtual-museum-tour

SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL ZOO
https://nationalzoo.si.edu/education/educational-activities-you-can-do-home



Create, Code & Connect

	NAME	ADDRESS
CREATE Draw, Graphic Design, or Publish Online	Art for Kids Hub	www.artforkidshub.com
	Canva	www.canva.com
	My Storybook	www.mystorybook.com/books/new
CODE Explore Coding Online	Scratch	https://scratch.mit.edu
	Code.org	www.code.org
	Blockly Games	https://blockly.games
CONNECT Social Media/Web to Follow & Learn	Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden	www.facebook.com/cincinnatizoo
	National Geographic Kids	www.facebook.com/nationalgeographickids
	@NASAGoddard	www.instagram.com/nasagoddard
	@iss (International Space Station)	www.instagram.com/iss
	@amnh (American Museum of Natural History)	www.instagram.com/amnh
	@vocords (Daily English Vocabulary Words)	www.instagram.com/vocords



PHP'S PARENTING FORUM

"Parenting Forum" was a *PHP* column in the 1990s where experts in gifted education responded to common parent concerns. In celebration of *PHP's* 25th anniversary, we have asked several experts to address a scenario from one of the earlier columns that remains a concern with many parents today.

Miles Needs a Friend

"Little Einstein" is my 10-year-old son's nickname. When Miles was younger, I thought that this was complimentary, but as he matures, I sense some mockery when I hear it. Miles has an encyclopedic brain that he feeds constantly by reading; reading is his life. No topic is too mundane or too elusive for him to investigate. However, he seems to be missing the boat when it comes to making friends and socializing. It breaks my heart to see him walking around at the park or on the school playground all by himself. I have tried every means I know to encourage him to make friendships and to interact socially with other children. Nothing has worked. Should I just give up and let him be? Please give me some direction. I don't want to ruin his life.

What Type of Child Do You Have?

By Dr. Edward R. Amend



Who is a peer for the asynchronous gifted or 2e child or teen? My mentor, the late Dr. Jim Webb, used to ask, *"A peer for what?"* because they may have different peers for different activities. In therapy, I gather background information about friendships from the parents' perspective and then ask the child (without the parent present) standard questions like, *"How many friends do you have?"* and *"Do you have anyone you consider a best friend?"* Answers range from no friends to far too many to count. I then ask an important follow-up, *"Do you think you have enough friends?"*

For some gifted or 2e individuals, one or two friends is plenty, while "hundreds" aren't enough for others. There is a difference between the gifted/2e client with one or two friends by choice, the gifted/2e client whose social anxiety limits interactions, and the gifted/2e client who lacks the social skills necessary to develop friendships. Finding out which type of child you have is important so you can set appropriate expectations for them (and for you) as you try to address the situation. Keep in mind that your child having limited friendships may be more of a problem for you than for them.

Edward R. Amend, Psy.D., is a clinical psychologist at The Amend Group, a comprehensive center for psychological, educational, and gifted services in Lexington, KY.

Resources

How to be a Friend: A Guide to Making Friends and Keeping Them by Laurie Krasny Brown and Marc Brown teaches young children all about friendship.

Enemy Pie by Derek Munson is an illustrated children's book about friendships and getting rid of "enemies."

Dr. Seuss stories like *Yertle the Turtle* and *The Sneetches; The Sissy Duckling* by Harvey Fierstein; and *Scribbleville* by Peter Holwitz can be used to teach about differences and how to treat others.

Help Your Child Find Other Avid Readers

By Dr. Jaime Castellano



I would venture to say that kids like Miles have been in existence for a very long time. Like Miles, I was a voracious reader in my youth. Reading was my thing. I loved reading. I remember reading *Jaws;* I also read at a very early age the *Gulag Archipelago* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and *Helter Skelter,* about the Charles Manson murders. It took me the whole summer to read those books. This was a huge difference between me and the other boys of my barrio. I liked to read; they didn't. While they played sports, I stayed home to read. My parents didn't quite understand my interest in reading and the joy it brought me. They were each borderline illiterate in both English and Spanish.

In my work with gifted Hispanic students today, I work with students like Miles. And like Miles' mother, their parents express similar concerns. Many tell me that they do not know how to help their child because they are limited in their English, often uneducated, undocumented, and worry more about getting food on the table and paying rent. Even so, I tell them there are options to consider. I suggest that they talk with their child's gifted education teacher(s) and ask if the school provides any no-cost programs for avid readers. I even offer to attend that meeting with them. And with the advances of technology, I suggest that they consider enrolling their child in a book club designed for advanced readers of their age. This allows their child to not only focus on their interest in reading but also exposes them to other students who have similar interests and provides an opportunity to socialize. Finally, I request parent permission to connect their child with other gifted students of their age I know and work within the barrios who have the same interest to plan a playdate. The hope and expectation is that while they connect to each other through reading, they form lasting friendships and increase their experiences in socializing with others.

Jaime A. Castellano, Ph.D., is a professor at Florida Atlantic University in the Department of Exceptional Student Education and an award-winning, author, scholar, principal, and educator.

Virtual or In-Person Enrichment Connects Peers with Similar Interests

By Dr. Jessica Koehler



Navigating the social world can be arduous for many intellectually gifted children. Too often, these unique learners encounter situations with same-aged peers who struggle to understand their idiosyncratic interests and abilities. Luckily for us, we live in a highly connected digital world that provides opportunities for previously inaccessible social connections. Online enrichment classes for gifted learners such as *Online G3* and *Athena's Advanced Academy* offer gifted learners academic and social experiences to connect with similar peers. Programs like the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth and the Davidson Academy offer summer camps and year-round classes to help create opportunities for advanced learners to meet with each other virtually or in person. Beyond that, parents also have access to social media sites with specific groups geared toward gifted children. On these sites, parents connect and learn about children with similar cognitive profiles, and their kids can often form meaningful friendships via a multitude of platforms from *Discord* to *Zoom.* Local organizations with academic classes, sports teams, or other hobbies geared toward your child's interests may also be an avenue to spark social interactions that may be a better fit for your son than the local park or school playground.

Jessica Koehler, Ph.D., currently teaches online classes to gifted learners and writes for *Psychology Today* while homeschooling her two exceptional boys.

Resources

Online G3, **www.onlineg3.com**

Athena's Advanced Academy, **https://athenasacademy.com**

Extracurricular Activities Support the Development of Friendships

by Pamela M. Peters



As a parent, I can relate to the feeling of helplessness that comes with watching a child struggle to find friends. Gifted students, like all of us, want to feel connected to other people but often have interests that differ from or are more intense than those of their age peers. I suggest finding an enrichment activity for your son that aligns with his interests and might expose him to a new group of potential friends. Some research shows that extracurricular activities support the development of friendships in middle and high school.[1]

When my now 16-year-old son was in second grade, he struggled to bond with his age peers. He wanted to talk about Greek mythology when they wanted to play ninjas. He loved math, but wanted to talk about advanced concepts. I started a Math Olympiad team at his school, which allowed him to interact with older students around a topic of interest. He was able to develop new friendships that continued as those students moved to middle school. I would investigate enrichment options to expose your son to others who share his interests.

Pamela M. Peters is a doctoral student at the University of Connecticut. She is pursuing a degree in Educational Psychology with dual focus areas: Gifted Education, Creativity, & Talent Development and Research Methods, Measurement, & Evaluation.

Endnote

[1] Schaefer, D. R., Simpkins, S. D., Vest, A. E., & Price, C. D. (2011). The contribution of extracurricular activities to adolescent friendships: New insights through social network analysis. *Developmental Psychology, 47*(4), 1141–1152.

Find a Group Where a Child Feels Valued and Comfortable

By Dr. Jessica LaFollette



As a middle grades teacher of the gifted, I've realized that friendship and belonging are some of the most important and difficult aspects of growing up. This is especially true now when the digital world often keeps kids inside and endlessly entertained, but alone. Miles definitely needs a group where he feels comfortable and valued, but this may not have to happen with his same-age peers at school. Fortunately, there are many places where he can connect with others who share his interests. I would suggest starting at the local library, but also look for groups that meet at bookstores or table-top game stores.

The next step would be to find a gifted program that can provide friendship and intellectual stimulation. Summer programs and virtual experiences are available, even if your local school does not have an official program. A teacher that Miles knows and trusts can be a great resource for local ideas and can possibly suggest group projects and extracurriculars with peers that are kind and welcoming to unique kids. Finally, when he does find a friend that he connects with, you may need to teach him how to nurture that friendship in positive ways. It may also be possible that Miles actually feels most comfortable spending time alone and really only needs smaller doses of social interaction.

Jessica LaFollette, Ph.D., has been teaching gifted students for 20 years. She is president-elect of the Kansas Association for the Gifted, Talented and Creative (KAGT) and chair-elect of NAGC's Parent, Family & Community Network.

Resources

NAGC Parent TIP sheet on making friends: **bit.ly/3AZzmNh**

www.davidsongifted.org/prospective-families/gifted-education-and-support-options/

www.sengifted.org/post/introversion-the-often-forgotten-factor-impacting-the-gifted



Find Mental Age, Not Chronological Age Peers

By Ann Smith



Many parents are concerned when their gifted child doesn't connect with other age-mates and are surprised to learn that what children tend to look for in friends is dictated more by mental age than chronological age. In general, children choose friends based on similarities and gifted children tend to gravitate toward children who are at similar stages of intellectual and emotional development.

Early elementary years tend to provide the greatest challenge, especially for children with advanced verbal and abstract reasoning abilities. The other kids simply don't understand them. This disconnect can look like the gifted child has delayed social and emotional development; however, much of the time, if the gifted child is placed with another child of similar interests and abilities, social and emotional concerns disappear. As children grow, enrichment programs, advanced coursework, and acceleration opportunities help mitigate the social isolation that many gifted children experience in their younger years.

We choose friends throughout life based on common interests, abilities, and even emotional depth—whatever the age difference may be. As Dr. Miraca Gross has stated, a faithful friend is a "sure shelter;" a deep and lasting relationship of trust, fidelity, and unconditional acceptance. And truly, isn't that what we are all searching for in friendship at any age?

Ann Smith is co-founder and executive director of the Gifted Support Center and *Leave Your Sleep for Education.* She is a parent and advocate for gifted children. She lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Resource

Gross, M. U. M. (2002, May 2). "Play partner" or "sure shelter": What gifted children look for in friendship. **www.sengifted.org/post/play-partner-or-sure-shelter-what-gifted-children-look-for-in-friendship**

In the early 2000s, *PHP* featured a column called "Effective Advocates." Today, parents remain one of the most important and necessary groups for affecting change in gifted education policy.

Making Positive Changes for Gifted Students in Your School District and State

By Roberta Braverman

Not all of us live in states or school districts that are supportive of gifted and talented students. It can be very frustrating for parents to learn that their state does not require school districts to identify gifted students or teachers to have received some coursework in gifted education or that the only advanced program in their school district is a middle school math program. The good news, however, is that it is possible to create positive change in your district and state.

There are statewide gifted education associations in most states that provide resources to teachers and families. Many work with state education agencies and/or the state legislature to develop or expand gifted policies and practices to guide school districts. You can find a list of state association websites on NAGC's Gifted by State (**www.nagc.org/gifted-state**) webpage. I encourage you to get involved in state-level advocacy. Not only will you be joining with others who want to see change in your state, but your elected officials want and need to hear from you on issues that you care about.

Be aware, though, that because most states leave many (or all) critical decisions about gifted education services to local school districts, you may also need to advocate for services with your local school board. Keep in mind that it is generally difficult for districts to make instructional exceptions for a single student (e.g., allowing a bright 4-year-old to begin kindergarten early), so joining with other parents who have similar concerns increases the chance for positive change. Check to see if there is a local gifted education parent group in your school district. If there is no formal group, perhaps you might consider creating one. NAGC offers a free e-book to help you get started (**bit.ly/3hfAzJK**). Note that even without a formal parent group, small groups of parents can be very successful in securing changes that support their advanced children.



There are some general rules of thumb that apply to advocacy on behalf of gifted children at the local and state level. They aren't difficult, but they require that parents do their homework—learning about the current situation, where the key decisions are made, what data helps make your case, and who else you might bring into your efforts—all to increase your effectiveness as an advocate.

Lay of the Land

Advocates must learn the current situation for gifted students. I call this *"Do your homework."*

State level. Learn your state's policies and regulations affecting gifted children. How does your state define gifted students? Does your state mandate identification and services? Does your state provide dedicated funding to school districts for gifted education? The best resource is NAGC's *2018-2019 State of the States in Gifted Education* report, which provides key data points for every state on an interactive map. **bit.ly/3CqasIL**.

Local level. Learn all you can about your school district's policies and practices that affect gifted students. Does your district identify students for services? If so, when does it occur and for what types of services? Is the process equitable? Is there a gifted education coordinator who oversees services for gifted students? Does your school district use NAGC's national standards for PreK–12 education to guide their gifted services?

Understand the Decision-making Structure

State level. Generally, advocates work with the state department of education and the state legislature. Find out if the department of education has a full-time staff person who is responsible for gifted education. In the legislature, learn who heads the education committees and the committees responsible for funding education. There are other officials, including the governor, who may play a role, but this is a start. You also need to learn the basics of the legislative process: When does your legislature meet and will there be hearings where you or other advocates could testify on the needs of gifted students in your state?

Local level. Generally, district decisions are made by a board of education in collaboration with the superintendent. There also may be committees that make key recommendations, such as a teacher preparation or curriculum and instruction committee. And there may be an advisory committee that includes parents that is part of the decision-making process.

How Your District and State Stack Up

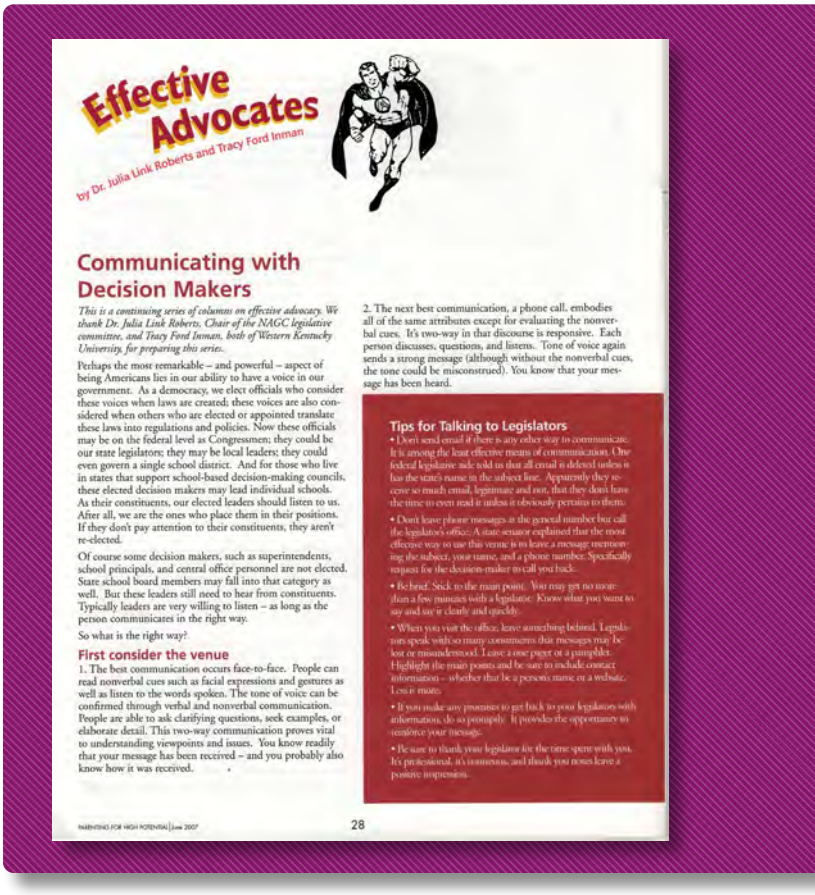
When asked to make a change in laws and policy, elected officials often ask what others are doing about the area of concern.

State level. Use the *NAGC State of the States* report to gather and document key data about your surrounding states, such as whether the states mandate identification and services, whether the states dedicate specific funding for gifted education, or whether the state has an acceleration policy.

Local level. Gather and document examples of gifted education services and practices in neighboring districts. Your state gifted education association may collect some of this data.

Know and Share the Numbers

Having some basic information about gifted education and gifted students helps decision makers better understand what advocates are asking for. The data points vary, depending on the specific change being sought.



Effective Advocates

by Dr. Julia Link Roberts and Tracy Ford Inman

Communicating with Decision Makers

This is a continuing series of columns on effective advocacy. We thank Dr. Julia Link Roberts, Chair of the NAGC legislative committee, and Tracy Ford Inman, both of Western Kentucky University, for preparing this series.

Perhaps the most remarkable – and powerful – aspect of being Americans lies in our ability to have a voice in our government. As a democracy, we elect officials who consider these voices when laws are created; these voices are also considered when others who are elected or appointed translate these laws into regulations and policies. Now these officials may be on the federal level as Congressmen; they could be our state legislators; they may be local leaders; they could even govern a single school district. And for those who live in states that support school-based decision-making councils, these elected decision makers may lead individual schools. As their constituents, our elected leaders should listen to us. After all, we are the ones who place them in their positions. If they don't pay attention to their constituents, they aren't re-elected.

Of course some decision makers, such as superintendents, school principals, and central office personnel are not elected. State school board members may fall into that category as well. But these leaders still need to hear from constituents. Typically leaders are very willing to listen – as long as the person communicates in the right way.

So what is the right way?

First consider the venue

1. The best communication occurs face-to-face. People can read nonverbal cues such as facial expressions and gestures as well as listen to the words spoken. The tone of voice can be confirmed through verbal and nonverbal communication. People are able to ask clarifying questions, seek examples, or elaborate detail. This two-way communication proves vital to understanding viewpoints and issues. You know readily that your message has been received – and you probably also know how it was received.

2. The next best communication, a phone call, embodies all of the same attributes except for evaluating the nonverbal cues. It's two-way in that discourse is responsive. Each person discusses, questions, and listens. Tone of voice again sends a strong message (although without the nonverbal cues, the tone could be misconstrued). You know that your message has been heard.

Tips for Talking to Legislators

- Don't send email if there is any other way to communicate. It is among the least effective means of communication. One federal legislative aide told us that all email is deleted unless it has the state's name in the subject line. Apparently they receive so much email, legitimate and not, that they don't have the time to even read it unless it obviously pertains to them.
- Don't leave phone messages at the general number but call the legislator's office. A state senator explained that the most effective way to use this venue is to leave a message mentioning the subject, your name, and a phone number. Specifically request for the decision-maker to call you back.
- Be brief. Stick to the main point. You may get no more than a few minutes with a legislator. Know what you want to say and say it clearly and quickly.
- When you visit the office, leave something behind. Legislators speak with so many constituents that messages may be lost or misunderstood. Leave a one-pager or a pamphlet. Highlight the main points and be sure to include contact information – whether that be a person's name or a website. Less is more.
- If you make any promises to get back to your legislators with information, do so promptly. It provides the opportunity to reinforce your message.
- Be sure to thank your legislator for the time spent with you. It's professional, it's courteous, and thank-you notes leave a positive impression.

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Some basic data points for advocacy at the state and local level are:

- **Numbers of gifted students as a percentage of all students.** The data on gifted students may be officially collected or you may need to estimate the percentage of students who may be gifted (most estimates for academically gifted students range between 5% and 10% of the student population).
- **Number of gifted students who are receiving services.**
- **Amount of funding spent on gifted education** as a percentage of total education spending (and how this compares to other states/districts).
- **Your state and district outcomes** in math and reading achievement compared to others. State and school leaders would like to see large numbers of students at the top achievement level, but that may not be the case in your state and district.

Identify and Engage Others

Generally, having more advocates is more effective. Having advocates with different points of view and experiences is most effective.

State level. It's helpful to secure advocates for gifted students

(Continues on p. 19)



How Advocates in New Jersey Rallied Together to Secure A New Gifted Education Law

By Roberta Braverman

Parents, educators, gifted students, and university professors joined forces with the New Jersey Association for Gifted Children (NJAGC) to champion legislation and see it through to the finish line in 2020. And while advocates for gifted children in New Jersey are excited about the new law passed in our state—and are doing all they can to ensure that every school district makes changes to comply with the law—make no mistake, this didn't "just happen."

What doesn't get counted doesn't count. Our state situation was pretty grim. Prior to the new law, the state department of education (DOE) did not ask districts to report data on their numbers of identified gifted students nor the number of gifted education specialized staff employed, among other basic data points, even though state administrative code from 2000 directed that this should be done. A law was needed to ensure compliance. Since New Jersey is mostly a "home rule" state and there is no state funding to school districts specifically for gifted education, decisions and practices across the state significantly varied by district from excellent to poor to non-existent. Lack of accountability and guidance from the DOE led to these discrepancies.

The "asks" are clear. NJAGC has

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that reflect the state population. Parents, teachers, administrators, special education professionals, business leaders, psychologists, and guidance counselors would make a powerful group.

Local level. Parents have the most powerful voices but it is always helpful to have professionals in your community (e.g., psychologists, scientists), college recruiters, and business leaders speak to the benefit of advanced learning opportunities and the need for advanced curriculum for future careers.

Look for Opportunities to Raise Awareness

Creating change can take time so it is important to raise awareness of the needs of gifted students as often as possible in multiple venues. I call this, "*Show up and speak up.*"

State level. Look for opportunities to bring your requests to the state education agency and to the legislature such as by testifying or volunteering to serve on a committee or advisory group. Make appointments with staff in key offices to share information and explore possibilities.

Local level. Attend school board meetings and any committee hearings. Testify if possible. Ask questions about how changes under consideration will impact gifted students. Volunteer to serve on a committee. Not only will you meet school leaders but committee service offers an opportunity to advocate for the needs of gifted students.

Successful advocates help educate elected officials at every opportunity by providing data and other information to support their requested change. There are numerous examples where well-informed parent advocates made the difference in changing minds. It may take time, but you and other parents working together on behalf of gifted children can secure services for your children so that they will be challenged in the classroom to learn new things every day.

5 Ps of Advocacy

Preparation. Research what the laws and policies say, know the jargon, learn about current education trends, and create "do-able asks."

Politeness. Respect the professionals' intent to help students and provide information as needed about gifted, make appointments rather than dropping by, and write thank-you notes (which also allow you to re-emphasize your points and repeat what you may have been promised).

Patience. Change will not occur overnight; allow time for answers and follow up.

Perspective. Where does gifted fit? "Hop aboard moving trains" of educational trends such as social-emotional learning, equity and access, special education, and STEM.

Persistence. Continue to pursue goals, revisit the "asks," and take the message to new and varied stakeholders.

Resources

Nilles, K. (2017, March 12-14). *Influence of parents & third-party validators to drive change.* [Conference presentation]. NAGC Leadership and Advocacy Conference, Washington, D.C. **bit.ly/3noHaU5**

Robinson, A. & Moon, S. (2003). *Advocating for talented youth: Lessons learned from the National Study of Local and State Advocacy in Gifted Education.* **bit.ly/3ChCohs**

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a national assessment for students in Grades 4 and 8 (and periodically in Grade 12). This report provides state-level information. See **www.nationsreportcard.gov/**. District-level achievement, based on your state tests, is available from your state department of education's website.

National Association for Gifted Children. (2019). *Pre-K-grade 12 gifted programming standards.* **bit.ly/3GvdDRo** Advocates share the standards with school districts as best practice when developing or expanding their gifted education services.

Author's Note

Roberta Braverman has been a volunteer advocate in gifted education for decades. Her 25 years of service includes leadership at the state and national levels, working with NAGC, NJAGC, the National Education Association, and the NJ Education Association. She makes connections with education groups by writing for their publications and presenting at their conferences. Her multiple terms on NAGC's Public Policy & Advocacy Committee inspire Roberta to share strategies that resulted in NJ legislation. EDUK8OR, her NJ vanity license plate, describes this advocate/teacher/consultant's pride, profession, and passion. Look for her on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook: @RobertaBraverman

(Continued from p. 18)

been testifying at the public hearings of the New Jersey State Board of Education (NJSBOE) about the unmet needs of gifted students and their teachers in the state's 600+ school districts for years. Our requests for change varied slightly over the years, depending on what the NJSBOE was focused on. However, we repeatedly requested that gifted education be included in all DOE initiatives and correspondence with school districts on topics including the core curriculum, equity issues, English Language Learners, special education (as many gifted students are twice exceptional), federal education law compliance and funding, monitoring, data collection, and dissemination of best practice information. In addition, we asked that a staff person be appointed to address gifted and talented education and to lead the DOE through needed changes. In 2018, the NJSBOE sent us a letter indicating that our concerns were largely the responsibility of the DOE. However, they also indicated that we should advocate for legislation. This was the catalyst we needed to organize and get the job done. When your state BOE suggests that legislation is needed, the DOE and the state legislature sit up and take notice.

Create a vision and a plan. NJAGC's first step was to gather, with NAGC's assistance, examples of recent legislation for gifted from other states. We received help from Washington state in the form of draft bills and a chart template explaining why their legislation was needed. We modified those based on the needs we had identified and formed a committee of parents, educators, and a university professor to lead the process. Several others who testified before the NJSBOE were included in communications from the committee. A key part of our research was to find leaders in our state legislature, especially those on the education committees of the state Senate and Assembly. Luckily, my state senator was one of only five on the Senate Education Committee and my state assemblywoman was the chair of the Assembly Education Committee. As a constituent, I requested meetings to explain the need for a bill to address the problems and asked that my representatives be primary sponsors. They became the conduits to the Office of Legislative Services for the draft bills. Eventually identical bills were released simultaneously in both houses of the state legislature.



Share the story, be ready for last-minute changes. The advocacy team secured support from the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) and other state education groups. The knowledge and expertise of NJEA's government relations department helped us navigate the legislative process. Our team testified at the education committee meetings when the bills were introduced. We were moved by the personal stories of committee members who recognized the need for improvements in gifted education. They gave their support and passed the bill out of committee to the Senate and Assembly floor action calendar.

An eye-opening aspect of this journey was working with the legislative calendar. As elections for the New Jersey Assembly occurred during the 18 months of preparing and presenting this bill to the legislature, there were many blackout dates to work around. At the eleventh hour, just before the bill was to be brought to the Senate floor for a vote, the lead sponsor heard from two large administrator education groups that they had issues with some wording in the bill.

Modifications were needed if we were to win that vote. Our advocacy team worked tirelessly for two days via phone conferences with representatives from other education groups in the state to come to a consensus.

Strength in numbers. NJAGC advocacy leaders shared a chart outlining reasons to support the bill with every state representative in both houses via email contacts and phone calls. We also reached out to voters via email lists, social media, and the NJAGC website asking that they contact their elected state legislators. A scripted message was provided to make it as simple as possible. The bill unanimously passed the Senate in June 2019, on the last day of voting before the summer recess. The Assembly was not in session until after the November election cycle. The bill passed the Assembly on December 19, 2019, and was signed into law by Governor Phil Murphy on January 13, 2020.

Update: Post-Legislative Work Continues

A committee was formed by the DOE in February 2020. The statewide call for participants brought more than 50 interested parents, educators, and community members. It was decided that all volunteers could participate on one of five subcommittees: implementing the law; professional development; identification; programs and services; and the integration of cognitive and social emotional needs of gifted students.

Then the COVID-19 lockdown began. Meetings were held virtually to create resources for the law. NJAGC and committee chairs also contributed to DOE's links for virtual learning. The leaders of the five subcommittees continue to meet with staff of the DOE to contribute and advise them of best practices and provide help with "Lunch and Learn" sessions hosted virtually by the department.

By the time school began in Fall 2021, NJDOE had updated its web pages. Raising awareness, meeting the needs of gifted students, and clarifying school district responsibilities are ongoing goals of NJAGC's grassroots advocates. What a journey!

Resources

New Jersey Department of Education gifted education webpages: **www.nj.gov/education/standards/gifted/index.shtml**

NJAGC webpages: "Unpacking the law:" **www.nj.gov/education/standards/gifted/index.shtml**

New Jersey's Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act: **www.nj.gov/education/standards/gifted/legislation.shtml**

Author's Note

Roberta Braverman has been a volunteer advocate in gifted education for decades. Her 25 years of service includes leadership at the state and national levels, working with NAGC, NJAGC, the National Education Association, and the NJ Education Association. She makes connections with education groups by writing for their publications and presenting at their conferences. Her multiple terms on NAGC's Public Policy & Advocacy Committee inspire Roberta to share strategies that resulted in NJ legislation. EDUK8OR, her NJ vanity license plate, describes this advocate/teacher/consultant's pride, profession, and passion. Look for her on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook: @RobertaBraverman

DON'T MISS THESE IMPORTANT RESOURCES FOR PARENTS FROM NAGC!

Gifted & Talented Resources Directory

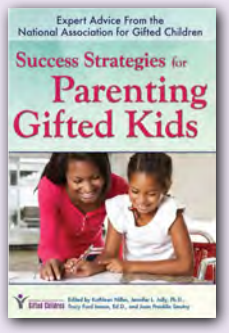
- Summer camps and enrichment materials
- Curriculum for home
- Other programs and services

NAGC Engage

NAGC engage

- Online community to network and share ideas with other parents and caregivers

Newest Book



- Curated collection from *PHP*
- Easy-to-understand, with practical advice and discussion questions
- Perfect for parents groups and families

All available at www.nagc.org

(Continued from p. 5)

Is Culturally Responsive and Considers Local Context

Since the original article, there has been tremendous growth in our understanding of how gifted and talented identification processes marginalize students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds as well as culturally and linguistically diverse students.[5] In response, group-administered and individually administered ability tests are more culturally responsive than in the past. Several offer nonverbal administration options and provide options to select test batteries that are most appropriate to students. Another welcome trend is increasing use of *universal screening* where all students in a grade level are given at least one screening test to demonstrate potential (in contrast to processes where students are tested only upon referral by a parent or teacher).

Another innovation is the use of *local norms,* which are test scores determined by comparing a student to other students in the same school building or district, rather than to a national sample of peers.[6] Although schools in a state, region, or country may all teach to the same standards, teachers adjust the curriculum to maximize the learning of the typical student in that teacher's classroom. In other words, the standard curriculum may be slowed or accelerated based on the needs of the majority of students. However, this practice means that every school will have students who learn substantially faster than their classmates and will be bored and disengaged by the standard curriculum. Local norms help identify these students within the local context.

Allows Students to Demonstrate Need in Specific Areas

Leaders in gifted education have long argued that schools should not offer just "the" gifted program, but should have a suite of services based on students' demonstrated needs. A well-aligned suite of services will allow for students who have a strength in, for example reading, to receive accelerated or enriched services in English Language Arts, but not necessarily in mathematics. Requiring students to excel in all academic domains (reading, mathematics, science, etc.) to receive gifted education services results in a small pool of students being served and excludes many students, including some twice-exceptional students who would benefit from subject-specific services.



Subject-specific services may include accelerated or honors courses for older students. For younger students, services may include flexible grouping of students during instruction, pull-out services, or independent projects in areas of strength.

How to Proceed

Much of Callahan and Eichner's original advice and cautions still stand: *"…testing can be helpful if you suspect a problem in school…But remember a [test] score alone does not determine a student's needs, an appropriate curriculum, or what program a district offers."* Test scores should not be used as strict gatekeepers for advanced academic services.

Their final piece of advice is still highly relevant to today's parents and educators: *"Assessments of children should provide additional information useful for educational planning or intervention,* ***not just for labeling.***" (emphasis mine) When we focus on labels, we lose sight of the true purpose of gifted education, which is providing an education that maximizes each student's potential.

Author's Note

Joni M. Lakin, Ph.D., is an associate professor of Educational Studies at the University of Alabama and affiliated with the Gifted Education and Talent Development Office (GETDO). She is a co-author of the Cognitive Abilities Test® (Form 8) and studies the design of equitable talent identification processes. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Iowa.

Endnotes

[1] National Association for Gifted Children (n.d.). *Identification.* **bit.ly/3Dd1vRY**

[2] National Association for Gifted Children. (2019). *Pre-K-grade 12 gifted programming standards.* **bit.ly/3GvdDRo**

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[4] Brulles, D., Hébert, T., Inman, T. F., & Newsom, T. (2020). *TIP sheet: Serving the whole gifted child.* National Association for Gifted Children. **bit.ly/3DlNTUR**

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Resource Round-Up

This column made its debut in the *PHP* premier issue, with the goal of providing resources for parents and students. For this issue *PHP* asked a few NAGC Jenkins Scholars to suggest their favorite game, book, puzzle, or app to fellow students. The Dr. Martin D. Jenkins Scholar Award honors the achievements of highly gifted Black students who excel academically. Dr. Jenkins (1904-1978) was one of the first to study giftedness in Black children.

What is a favorite game/book/puzzle/app that you would recommend to other students? Why?

Dual Language & The Classics

As a student who loves learning languages, I highly recommend the *Duolingo* and *Fluent* apps for students to use in their free time. *Duolingo* is an app that offers nearly a hundred different engaging, game-like language courses with content from around the world. The lessons are personalized with vocabulary lists and challenge levels developed according to one's skill. The app also offers podcasts, short stories, dictionaries, and a conversation forum for learners around the world to connect over their new language skills. *Fluent*, available as an app and computer extension, provides short vocabulary quizzes and integrates new vocabulary into one's regular internet activity.

As an avid reader, I also recommend that students pick up a classic novel. I have recently enjoyed several of Shakespeare's plays, including *Romeo and Juliet, Midsummer Night's Dream,* and *Macbeth.* I can also recommend several of Charles Dickens' novels, such as *Oliver Twist, A Tale of Two Cities,* and *Great Expectations.* There are several resources to assist with less common terms and phrasing within these pieces, for anyone worried about having difficulty understanding the older styles of writing. However, it's guaranteed that once you start reading one of these great classics, it will be hard to put it down.

Eryn Files is from Tallahassee, FL, and a 2020 NAGC Dr. Martin D. Jenkins Scholar

The New York Times Puzzles

My favorite puzzle app is *The New York Times* Crossword! Every 24 hours there's a new mini-crossword puzzle, and they also have other word-focused brain teasers including the "Spelling Bee" and "Letter Boxed."

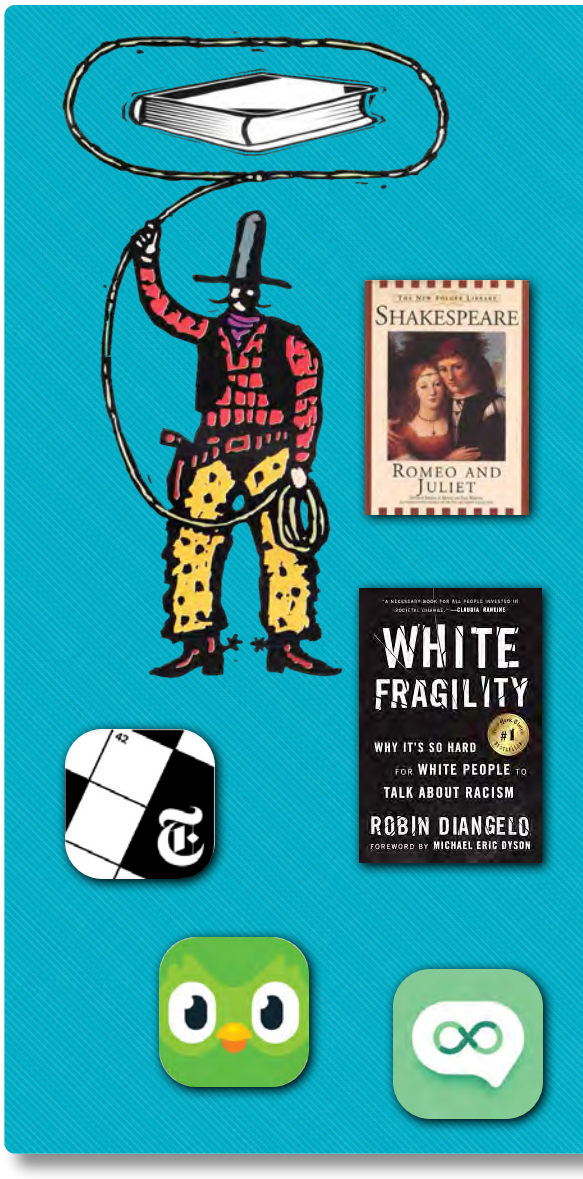
I play each of these games every day along with the many other game options they offer, and I compete with my friends and teachers as well, so they're super engaging for me! I would highly recommend downloading the app or visiting *The New York Times* website to play any of their daily puzzle games!

Asaiah Gifford is from Aurora, CO, and a 2021 NAGC Dr. Martin D. Jenkins Scholar

From Mindless to Mindful

My favorite game is *Candy Crush*, the online puzzle that has numerous variations including matching items and finding patterns as well as increasing difficulty levels. As a person with ADHD, I find that I need to do something with my hands while I pay attention to lectures in class. For me, *Candy Crush* takes just enough mental energy to focus on what is being said while also getting jitters out.

My favorite book would be *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo. It is an expert explanation of why racism still exists, it focuses on the accountability of prejudices, and it counsels to avoid shaming people for having prejudices. I think that is the difference between this book and other anti-racist texts: This isn't a book to shame people; instead it educates and gives tools to disarm racism while still recognizing the harmful effects of racism on the individual.



Shana Saint-Phard is from Denver, CO, and a 2021 NAGC Dr. Martin D. Jenkins Scholar

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